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THE SMALL WOMAN

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TONIGHT you must sleep like a child. When you were a child, you slept like a child. Your mind was asleep as well. Tonight, with Horlicks, you can sleep as soundly again. *Avoid* the shallow, restless sleep that starves the body. Tonight, Horlicks for you.

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JOHN BULL

189 HIGH HOLBORN LONDON W.C.1

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REPORT FROM THE EDITOR

Alan Burgess stumbled on a tremendous story

THEY were just a few lines of print, and they simply said that a woman called Gladys Aylward had returned to Britain after spending twenty years in China as a missionary. By chance, Alan Burgess saw them. He was writing and producing a series of true stories for a B.B.C. feature called "The Undefeated."

"In the hope that she might have a story which would fit into the pattern, I went to see her," he says. She told him that nothing very exciting had ever happened to her. Burgess persisted: surely something interesting must have occurred in twenty years.

After fifteen minutes of conversation, Gladys Aylward mentioned that she had "once taken some children across the mountains. . . ." Burgess asked more questions. And soon he felt "that I was on the brink of the most tremendous story I had ever stumbled across."

He wrote and produced it as a sixty-minute feature for the B.B.C. Now he has written it down in full as *The Small Woman*, which begins on page 11. It will be published as a book next year. Already the film rights have been sold.

Burgess's own life has not been short of adventure. Born in Birmingham in 1915, he sailed round the world before the war in the barquentine Cap Pilar and then, in 1938, was a mountain guide in New Zealand. He joined the Merchant Navy in 1939 and two years later went into the R.A.F. as a parachute instructor. Between 1941 and 1946 he made 116 parachute jumps.

In November, 1946, he became a B.B.C. features producer. He has just returned from Rhodesia and South Africa, where he gathered material for the Christmas Commonwealth programme.

Of Gladys Aylward he says: "She is one of the most remarkable women of our generation. Even now, back in Britain, she lives as she always has done, simply and frugally, and from day to day."

ROBERT HOLMES spends most of his spare time haunting London's used-car showrooms. One Saturday morning, when he was trying to convince his wife that the car they were looking at was just the one for them, he got the idea for a short story involving a high-pressure car dealer and a pretty young customer. *That Special Magic* begins on page 28.

Holmes, who is thirty and a London journalist, still can't find a car which suits his wife's tastes and his own. He wants one that is "very fast, very powerful, and very economical." His wife Pat says that it must also carry her and their two young children in comfortable safety. "They just don't make that sort of car," says Holmes. "And if they did I probably couldn't afford it."

An enthusiastic motorist, Holmes has owned three cars in the last two years. He is slightly ashamed to admit that he was once a policeman who spent a lot of time on "blister" patrols—booking motorists for traffic offences. "But I did meet my wife that way. Our introduction came when she parked a car in the West End and I warned her for obstruction."

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HP3 is one of the two "miracle" Ilford films; it is *the* high-speed film for *daytime* snapshots in winter. For outdoor photography *at night,* use the still faster HPS.

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Free Speech

- **Old friends bring Christmas cheer**
- **Are people bored with bazaars?**
- **Record business on the line**

I USED to feel sad at the number of people I met and struck up friendships with who drifted out of my life because either they or I moved away or because our interests diverged.

But every year since the war, and in time for Christmas, I have set myself the job of looking up a friend whom I haven't seen for many years: someone I knew well at school, at church, or the sports club. My annual visits have taken me all over the country, and this year I have been invited to Ireland.

They tell me it is harder to make friends in middle age. But the welcoming smiles from the front door steps tell me that you don't need to make new friends; just remember some of the old ones. And what better time than Christmas?—MRS. D. W., Hastings, Sussex.

Pearl Fishers

F. Dean's reference to mussel seed pearls ("Free Speech," November 17) reminded me of my childhood days, when we went pearl-fishing in the River Tay in Perthshire; for some reason pearls seemed more plentiful in that river. We would peer through a glass jam jar into the water and bring up the mussel pearls by means of a long stick with a cleft at the end.

My aunt had a beautiful pink pearl made into a brooch. But most of the pearls we got were very small and irregular in shape.—MISS J. MCGLASHAN, Grosvenor Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

Dull Sundays

A dull or rainy Sunday afternoon can be a very depressing experience for people in large cities, especially those living in lodgings. I think public libraries and their reference and reading rooms should be open for these people. So often in the same buildings there are museums and art galleries open. The same hours could apply to all departments.—JOHN WATERFIELD, Devonport, Plymouth.

Bazaar Bygones

The season of bazaars is in full swing again. My heart sinks at the thought of them. I don't want any knitted, embroidered or crocheted egg cosies, hair-tidies, bedroom slippers or table mats. I don't think anybody else does either, for I swear I've seen some of those things over and over again at dozens of different bazaars.

I feel sure that in a few years some wideawake American will wander into one of our streamer-decorated halls and realize that he has found something rare and quaint, something to start a craze for the collection of "knitted bygones," which will disappear for ever, to the astonishment and relief of the bazaar-goers and the eventual relief of the nostalgic.—MRS. CANN, Watford, Herts.

Ted Ray's Lesson

Reading your television Supplement (JOHN BULL, November 10), I was reminded of the sharp lesson I learned in a B.B.C. television show last year. It was: always rehearse, and never take anything for granted.

On this occasion I was taking the part of an old waiter in a restaurant, and the act was to finish up with a skirmish with plenty of custard pies and crockery. I didn't rehearse the throwing part. "Leave it until the show," I told the producer. "It'll be all right."

But what happened during the show was that I slipped on a custard pie, fell down and cut my hand very badly—while the audience roared their heads off.

Incidentally, your Supplement says that I am under exclusive contract to I.T.A. The fact is that I have never been under contract exclusively to them, and I have just concluded an exclusive contract with the B.B.C.—TED RAY, Arlington, Cannon Hill, London, N.14.

Always On Duty

Shouldn't the policeman in your cover picture (JOHN BULL, November 17) have an arm band to show that he is on duty? If he isn't on duty, I shouldn't imagine that he would be bothering about a parking offence.—JAMES CAMPBELL, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, Scotland.

Provincial policemen may wear the armband or not, according to the local rule. Metropolitan Police always wear it unless they are on office duty, a custom which originated in 1830 when it was a sign that an officer was on duty. But today police officers are virtually always ready to act as policemen.

Voice Production

As manager of a large wholesale concern, I had always interviewed prospective employees personally before engaging them.

But much of our business is done by telephone, and I have found that although most applicants looked impressive enough at the interview, they often displayed a crude manner on the telephone.

Now I interview all candidates over the telephone, seeing the final selection only when I have decided to employ him.

Some people might call my staff a

strange-looking bunch, but they are bringing in record business. And many customers pay tribute to their courtesy at the other end of the line. —W. R. R., Watford, Herts.

Imported

I was interested to know that the Irish use our coinage alongside their own ("Free Speech," November 3), for here in Holyhead we use Irish coins as well as English.—J. O. THOMAS, Holyhead, Anglesey.

"Irish coinage is not legal tender in Britain," says a bank official, "but both coins and notes are freely circulated in Holyhead and are accepted by the banks there."

Store Of Memories

I have just opened an old tin trunk that I received from my late parents' home. What a host of memories it has stirred!

First I came across some regimental buttons and badges of the first

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

**"A tin for the Naughtons–
they all love toffees"**

Sharp's Toffees are a friendly gift—just right for the Naughtons. The whole family will love them. And Joan will find the pretty caddy so useful long after the toffees have disappeared.

Sharps

Toffees for Christmas

I'm afraid my husband won't have anything but Whitbread

No, it's been his favourite for years. He likes to pretend he's a bit old-fashioned, but I tell him the young people also are finding out that it's worth while taking the trouble to *choose* what one eats and drinks. And to pay a little more to get the quality . . . you find that? I'm not surprised!

WHITBREAD

the superb Pale Ale

My recipes never fail

thanks to my **SALTER** domestic balance

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You **need** your

FOX'S *Glacier* **MINTS**

Glucose for energy — Peppermint to aid digestion

THE FINEST PEPPERMINT IN THE WORLD

Free Speech

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

World War, and several poppies from Flanders, now faded between the pages of an old book.

There was a bundle of coloured dance programmes, some dated 1912, with their little pencils still attached; and some Charleston garters of green silk with bells. Those were the days, I suppose, but I blush to think that I ever wore them.

Finally, I found several sheets of white tissue paper. There was a star on each, which had to be touched with a red-hot poker. I watched the sparks travel along, leaving a trail in black reading "Kitchener Needs You." Others read "Admiral Jellicoe" and "Earl Haig."—MRS. M. COWARD, Warrington, Lancs.

Double Victory

Many dog owners contend that cats are less intelligent than dogs. But I don't agree. My marmalade cat achieves two aims rarely attained by human beings, let alone dogs: he does exactly as he likes, and he gets everything he wants.—ANNE LEE, Southwell, Notts.

Termites' Ravages

If only Dr. John Carthy ("Small World At Your Feet," JOHN BULL, November 10) could train termites to make good some of the colossal damage they do in Africa—despite all the insecticides used!

During the second World War, I lived in one of the oldest European houses in East Africa, and one day half the ceiling of an upstairs room gave way. Termites had been eating away the wooden laths behind the plaster.—MRS. N. ROPER, Park Avenue, Worthing, Sussex.

Trouble-free Parking

In these days, when garage rents are so exorbitant, garages themselves are hard to come by and parking meters are threatened, the people of nearby Wolverley can count themselves extremely fortunate.

The village clusters round the foot of a high sandstone cliff, upon which the church stands. The rock is honeycombed with man-made caves, some of them cut out many years

ago for storage purposes. Today, as my photograph shows, they can serve as drive-in garages, or just for parking. — J. B. SHILVOCK, Kidderminster, Worcestershire.

No Squabbles Now

In a large store in Scotland recently, I noticed a novel method of preventing disputes about who was next to be served.

On entering the store, customers picked up numbered tickets, each customer waiting until his number was called out in rotation.—A. M. DRUMMOND, Poole, Dorset.

"This scheme is operated only in the larger departments, such as foodstuffs, where there is a staff of about eighteen," says the manager of the store. "Over several years it has proved most successful."

Back In Fashion

As a child, my father used to live in a large early-Victorian house in Islington, then regarded as a very fashionable part of London. When he grew up, he found he couldn't afford to maintain his parents' large house, so when he married he moved into a semi-detached house ten miles out in the suburbs. But, with the high cost of travelling into London, these districts which have been neglected for so long seem to be coming into their own again. I have just moved from the suburbs into a house only a quarter of a mile from my father's old home which, like many others, has been turned into most attractive flats—an interesting swing of the pendulum.—D. R. W., Islington, London.

Taking No Risks

Number thirteen not only affects Rugby League games ("Free Speech," November 17), but T.T. races, too. There is never a rider numbered thirteen in T.T. races run in the Isle of Man every year. The riders are dispatched at ten-second intervals at the start of the race, but there is a time lapse of twenty seconds between numbers twelve and fourteen.—J. OATES, Barnsley, Yorkshire.

Appreciative Wives

Captain Walmsley ("Three Thousand Lonely Wives," JOHN BULL, November 10) does a grand job and she most certainly comes across all kinds of women among army wives. But the spitting, aggressive kind are few and far between, and Captain Walmsley would be the first to admit this fact. We know too well the repercussions of this sort of behaviour; what it would mean to our men, and sometimes to our whole families.

In his article, Keith Ellis gave the wrong impression of army wives. Nine out of ten of us put up with all sorts of petty restrictions, because we know that, under the circumstances, they are necessary. We appreciate everything that is done for us.—MRS. C. McMULLEN, South Shore, Blackpool.

Water Logged

During a recent car run in the country, I noticed a lot of trees being taken from a nearby pond. I was told that they had been left in the water to preserve them, but I should have thought that water rotted them. —MRS. G. ELRICK, Holburn Street, Aberdeen.

"Water helps to preserve timber by keeping its pores open," says the Timber Trade Federation. "Timber is used fairly quickly here and sawmill ponds are few, but in Sweden and Canada the logs are kept in water for many months."

Docile Dogs

What a mistake it is to judge a dog by its size and appearance! Recently a woman stepped aside to avoid my four-month-old bull mastiff, saying, "I'm giving you a wide berth." But these dogs are noted for their kindly disposition and reliability with children.

When we were young we had a bull mastiff, and a more loyal and gentle pet would have been hard to find. Three of my tradesmen say they step much more warily where small dogs are concerned.—MRS. J. HUSBAND, Wantage Road, Streatley-on-Thames, Berkshire.

"There are exceptions, but it is generally true that larger breeds, such as boxers, Labradors, Great Danes and retrievers, are docile with children," says the Canine Defence League. "Many smaller dogs, like terriers, tend to be snappy."

Reasonable Doubt

I know that to plead ignorance of the law is no excuse for breaking it, but laws and by-laws are often framed so that the ordinary citizen finds it difficult to know just what they mean. This applies to legal documents, too, and many people have entered into contracts with only the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Player's keep me busy

Send your Christmas Good Wishes gliding on a

A **SWAN PEN** is a happy gift, a generous gift, a useful gift. Can you imagine anybody failing to be delighted with one of these beautiful all-British pens? Best of all, even with their high quality and value, Swan Pens don't cost a fortune. There's a Swan at the price YOU WANT. Look for yourself.

SWAN WARWICK

Somebody on your list needs a special gift and you have the answer here. Beautifully designed and finished, the Warwick has a generous ink capacity, easy one movement twist-fill, and the world-famous Swan 14 ct. hand-wrought gold nib. In gleaming Diplomat Black, rich Chancery Red, City Grey or sunny Florentine Blue.

45/-

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Another fine pen that will give pleasure to somebody you know. Attractively styled and finished, the Oxford is designed for long and reliable service. It has the famous Swan hand-wrought 14 ct. gold nib, and easy twist-fill action. Available in Diplomat Black, Chancery Red, City Grey, Florentine Blue.

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SWAN CALLIGRAPH

This very special Pen is a delightful gift for any of your friends who takes an interest in beautiful writing. The Calligraph has a unique nib, hand-wrought and specially ground from 14 ct. gold. It enables anyone with a little practice to write in a bold and beautiful script. Easy twist-fill action. Colours: Diplomat Black, Chancery Red, City Grey, Florentine Blue.

39/6

THE FAMOUS BLACKBIRD

A most delightful gift at a very modest price. Made by the Swan people, it is well designed and beautifully finished, with simple lever fill and hand-wrought 14 ct. gold nib. Blackbird has a high reputation all over the world and its robust construction is a guarantee of long service. Colours: Black, Juniper Green, Kashmir Beige, Florentine Blue, Tapestry Red, Mexican Tan.

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SWAN "RAPI-DRY" WRITING FLUID

A pen as good as Swan should have a writing fluid worthy of it.
RAPI-DRY keeps pens clean and flows smoothly and evenly.
It never clogs or crusts and dries almost instantly.

Swan **PENS**

THE HAPPIEST GIFT FOR A HAPPY CHRISTMAS

MADE BY THE SWAN PEN PEOPLE

Free Speech

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

vaguest idea about the meaning of the documents they have signed.—J. NELSON, 81 Sandwell Street, Buckhaven, Fife.

"Many documents, such as hire-purchase agreements, have been set aside by the courts on the ground that they were unintelligible to the people signing them," says a lawyer. "But sometimes documents have to be complicated so as to cover all possible interpretations and contingencies.

"The best course is never to sign anything that is not understood."

As She Is Played

Reading about conkers in Holland ("Free Speech," November 10) stirred memories of a Belgian airfield after the Normandy invasion. I was an R.A.F. flight lieutenant stationed there, and our mess was the local château, whose owner, a baron, was related to the Belgian royal family.

We initiated the baron into the boisterous R.A.F. version of conkers during one of his visits, and we impressed upon him that a keen player carried around his own particular conkers. The next time he came to dine his chauffeur carried into the mess hall a very large hold-all. The baron opened it—it was full to the brim with conkers.—L. HUNT, London, W.C.1.

Weather Warning

I was interested to read about lunar halos ("Free Speech," November 10) because my father had a friend who spent much of his life in Derbyshire and one of his favourite sayings was, "Near burr, far rain; far burr, near rain." This meant that the nearer the halo to the moon, the farther off rain would be, and vice versa. We have proved this to be correct many times.—F. S. MANNING, Northchurch, Berkhamsted, Herts.

John Bull pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the John Bull Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post

Win £1,000 cash FREE for a cover title

THINK quickly, act quickly—there's no time to be lost. . . . This week is the last in JOHN BULL'S series of cover title competitions—your last chance of winning £100 *free* for the best cover title of the week, and that extra jackpot prize of £900 which will go to the writer of the best cover title in the whole series.

When you have decided on a title—consisting of not more than eight words—cut out the small reproduction of the cover printed at the foot of this page, paste it on the right-hand side of a plain postcard and write your title alongside it in BLOCK CAPITAL letters. Add your name and full postal address, then post the card (2d. stamp) to JOHN BULL, No. 12 Cover, 96 Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.), to arrive not later than Monday, December 17, 1956.

The prize of £100 will be awarded for the most apt and original title received. Each reader may send one postcard only for this week's contest, and only one title may be written on each postcard. The prize will be shared in the event of a tie. The Editor's decision is final on all matters concerning the competition. Employees of the proprietors of JOHN BULL (also of associated companies) and their families are not allowed to enter.

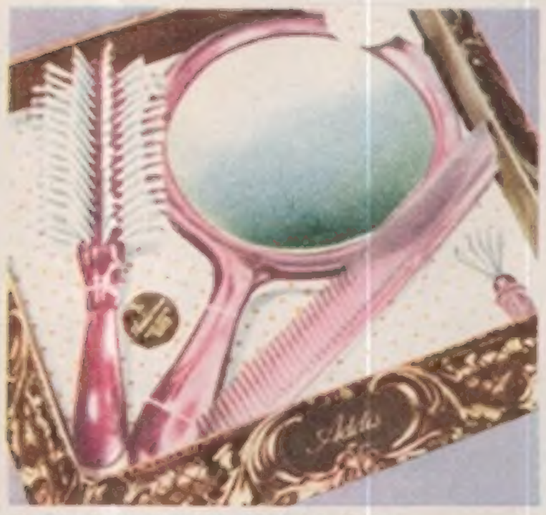
WINNER OF COVER CONTEST NO. 7

MRS. E. AVIS, of 42 Rushton Heights, Tarrant Rushton, Blandford, Dorset, has won £100 in JOHN BULL'S cover contest No. 7. Her title for Coleman's painting of the boy blacking his mother's pink shoes was ONE MINUTE TO CLOSE OF PLAY.

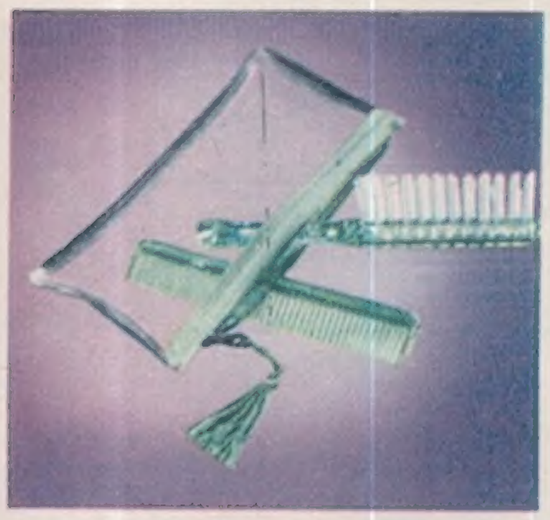
THE COVER

LAST verse—and if the lucky customers don't answer the door soon, the selection starts all over again. . . . That's not necessarily a threat, but Mays's cover carollers will themselves admit that their dog still finds it a little difficult to harmonize with a mouth-organ. Yes, it may be as well to pay up now. After all, those doorstep choristers have worked hard at their singing lessons all this term with the idea of cashing in on their education. But as this is the season of goodwill let's hope that the rest of the music class is touring some other district.

Addis ... ... THE PRESENT



Luxurious Addis gift to delight a woman's heart—Addis Beauty Brush with matching mirror, comb and brush cleaner, in a beautifully decorated gift pack—price 25/11.



Something she'll love for her handbag. Brush and comb set in practical plastic envelope. Pastel colours—price 5/11.

THAT CAN'T

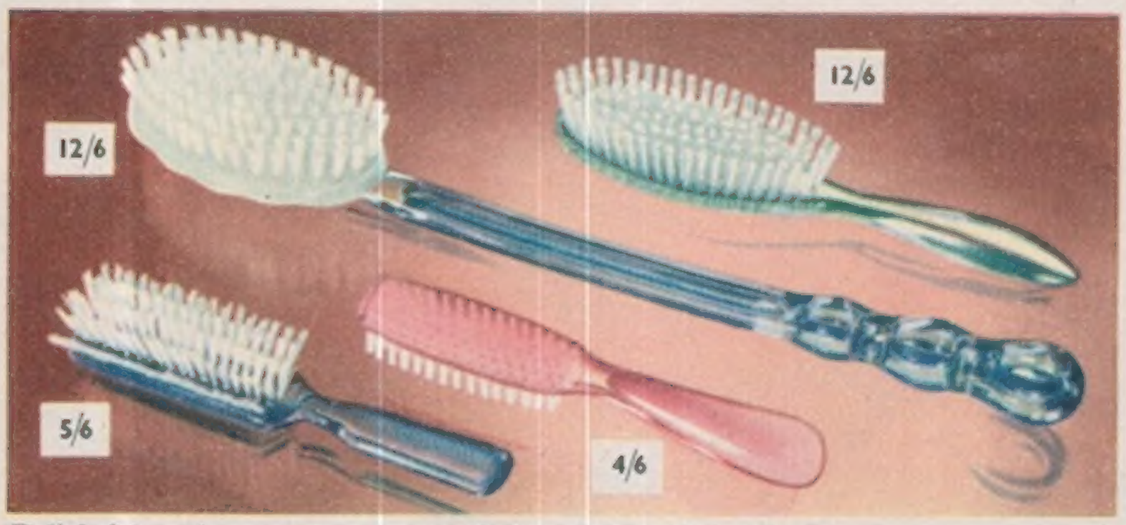
GO WRONG

First, you have a wonderfully wide choice—the Addis range is tremendous. Secondly, if your choice isn't quite right, the Addis Gift Exchange Scheme enables you, or the recipient, to change the present for another colour, or an altogether different Addis toilet product. With each gift goes a little leaflet describing this scheme. So save yourself worry, and save your friends embarrassment this year—make it an Addis Christmas!

Addis
ADDIS LTD
BRUSHWORKS · HERTFORD

For a younger sister, with a sophisticated note she'll love. Gleaming Beauty Brush with matching comb in frivolous candy-striped pack—price 10/11.

For men who are particular, Addis Clubman, with shell, ebony or bronze back—price 8/6 Addis Brainwave Brush with slot for comb. In ebony or tortoiseshell—price 12/-.



Delightful and unusual presents. Petite hairbrush—price 5/6. Clothes brush with shoehorn handle—price 4/6. Soft yet brisk bath brush, with detachable long handle—price 12/6. Elegant Patrician Brush—a dream in lovely translucent colours. With springy Flextron tufts—12/6. In bristle nylon mixture—18/11.

She'll love...

Evening in Paris Key Holder. **8/-**

Evening in Paris Perfume, 2 Soaps. **6/-**

Ashes of Roses Talcum
6 Bath Cubes. **4/5**
Also available in Ashes of Violets and Lavender.

Lavender 4 Bath Cubes, Soap. **2/6**
Also available in Ashes of Roses and Ashes of Violets.

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She'll be happy with a G.E.C.

Tea for two in two minutes with the Superspeed Kettle

The 3-pint size will boil one pint of water in two minutes or three pints in five and a half minutes. It saves you precious minutes morning, noon and night, and it is protected by a safety device should it ever boil dry.

And what a wonderful Christmas present! And for weddings and birthdays, too, there is no more welcome gift than a G.E.C. Superspeed Kettle. An ornament on any table—a boon in any home. Obtainable from your usual electrical supplier.

D5353A. ***3****-pint size* **£5·0·7** *tax paid.*
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Aluminium models from **£3·12·7.**

Favourite G.E.C. Christmas Gifts

Double-insulated cleaner
£24·3·6 *(tax paid)*

Designed for beauty hair-dryer
£5·2·5 *(tax paid)*

Bride's iron
£2·11·0 *(tax paid)*

Double-insulated floor polisher
£29·10·0 *(tax paid)*

● *Write for descriptive literature on the full range of G.E.C. Household Electric Appliances to The General Electric Co. Ltd., Magnet House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2*

An Englishwoman with a price on her head—in war-torn China

THE SMALL WOMAN

by ALAN BURGESS

This is the story—the amazing, almost incredible, real-life story—of Gladys Aylward, a little London parlourmaid, who became a missionary in China. The people took her for a foreign "devil," spat on her, threw mud at her. But soon they were calling her Ai-weh-deh, the "virtuous one."

The Japanese attacked China. When their troops tried to assault a group of Chinese women, Gladys Aylward opposed them, alone. She was brutally beaten. Later, in love with a Chinese officer, and by now a naturalized Chinese, she spied on the enemy. She was betrayed, soldiers hunted her, a price was put on her head. Still she did not give up: her thoughts were for the safety of the one hundred Chinese refugee children in her care. . . .

This is the story of Gladys Aylward, the virtuous one, a woman who believes in God.

WHO she was no one knew, but in China in those autumn days of 1941, with the Japanese invader pressing in on many fronts, and one half of the world trying hard to destroy the other in a furious holocaust of tanks and planes, guns and ships, violent death was such a near neighbour that the departure from this life of one small, unknown woman was of little concern to anyone.

The few English-speaking staff at the Scandinavian-American Mission at Hsing P'ing, far off in North-West China, knew neither her name nor where she came from. Two Chinese peasants had delivered her to the front gate, heaving her out from the back of an ox cart as unceremoniously as if she had been a rag doll. They knew she was a foreigner, even though she was dressed in Chinese clothes and carried a Chinese Bible; therefore they thought it more seemly that she should die close to her friends, her soul consigned to her own gods.

The Scandinavian-American Mission sent a wire at once to the Baptist Mission Hospital at Sian, asking if a doctor could come; and with a generous humanity which in the next few weeks was to be so freely given by all who were at that

She walked through the desolate, snow-bound countryside, a lone figure in a land where the wolf packs prowled

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN BERRY

Gladys Aylward, when a parlourmaid in London, decided that she was going to China—and not even war could stop her. But she had to elude secret police before reaching Tientsin (right)

hospital, the senior physician caught the next train. He arrived late in the afternoon, and examined the patient.

Her body was thin and undernourished; she bore the scar of a fairly recent bullet wound across her back; and although it was not apparent, she was also suffering from internal injuries caused by a brutal beating up which had taken place some months earlier. Her temperature was in the region of 105 degrees Fahrenheit; she was in a raving delirium.

At once the doctor gave her an intravenous injection which he knew would lessen the fever. By this time a Swedish-American nurse named Miss Nelson had also arrived, and he felt that he could leave the patient in her hands.

Five days later, a letter arrived at the Baptist Hospital informing the senior physician that the unknown woman was again in a delirium; her temperature had once more shot up to 105.

He caught the next train and found his patient just breaking out in the rash of that most dreadfully perilous disease, typhus. The doctor held out no hope, especially when further examination revealed that a patch of pneumonia had developed on one lung.

BY a coincidence, however, one of the Swedish-American missionaries who had just returned from leave in the United States had about twenty tablets of the new drug sulphapyridine in his personal kit, and he gladly offered them to the senior physician for the woman's use. With them the doctor curbed the pneumonia, but it was quite clear to him that, if the small woman was to have the slightest chance of survival, she would have to be moved to the hospital at Sian at once.

The train at Sian was met by bearers, and the unconscious woman was taken to hospital.

Fifteen days later, when the typhus fever was beginning to abate, she was still almost a complete enigma. As a nurse stood by her next day, a spasm of pain crossed her face and a whisper came from her lips.

"My children?" she said. "Where are my children? The Japanese are all round us. They'll kill us. I know they'll kill us."

The whisper mounted to a scream, and then abruptly she was raving in an uncouth Chinese dialect which no one could understand, but which later someone recognized as coming from a wild mountain region far to the north. The spasm of delirium passed. A faint smile formed on her face. There was such nostalgic reminiscence in the painfully articulated words: "Remember that first night of *Lilac Time*? That little tune that went *pom-pom-pom tiddley-om-pom-pom*. . . ."

"Your name?" the doctor asked. "What is your name?"

"Ai-weh-deh—the virtuous one."

They did not want her Chinese name, but her English name.

"Your name," said the small, insistent voice in her ear. "What is your name? Where do you come from?"

Her name was Gladys Aylward. She had been born in Edmonton, North London.

Sanity and memory gradually came back to her. She remembered that her family had moved to Cheddington Road when she was very small. A row of red brick houses, lace curtains, privet hedges. Aspidistras in the windows. Grey pavements. Each morning an unending procession of cheerful milkmen, greengrocers, bakers, and their horse-drawn carts down the streets. A happy childhood! She remembered her father coming home, clumping up the road in his heavy postman's boots, wearing his dark uniform with the red piping. Mum would be in the kitchen getting the tea, and she and Violet would be screaming around the house or running wild with the other children in the street.

A topee was sent to Gladys by the daughter of Sir Francis Younghusband, for whom she had worked in England

WHEN the Zeppelins came over London in the first World War, Gladys first discovered an antidote to being frightened. She would bring all the children in the street into the front parlour and sit them down against the inside wall. Then she would sit at the tiny old foot-operated organ, pedal furiously and scream out a hymn. Her belief in the morale-raising qualities of a good lusty hymn never deserted her.

She went straight from school into service. She moved from one parlourmaid job to another. One evening, rather bored, and with nothing else to do, she saw a banner proclaiming a religious revival displayed outside a local church. Inside, a dynamic young clergyman exhorted his small audience to serve God. Suddenly, Gladys wanted more from life than she was getting. She joined a local evangelical society, and gradually the urge to go to China eased into her mind. Eventually she was accepted as a probationer at the China Island Mission Training Home.

After three months the principal had to tell her that she could not manage the course of study.

"We accepted you to be trained in good faith, on trial. If you went on, it would be a waste of everyone's time and money. . . ." He left the sentence unfinished.

"I understand," she said quietly. "Thank you for letting me come. It's not your fault that I couldn't do all these things."

The principal tried to soften the disappointment.

"Two missionaries have just returned from China," he said. "Two very old ladies who need someone to look after them. They have rented

a house in Bristol. Would you be prepared to consider the job?"

Although she tried to hide it, what a disappointment her failure had been!

Only a few months later she was—at twenty-six, a tiny figure, very neat and slender, with dark hair parted in the middle and gathered into a bun at the back of her neck—a "Rescue Sister" on the Swansea Docks in South Wales. She got the job shortly after she went to help the old missionaries in Bristol. A rescuer of fallen women—and she hardly knew how they "fell" or what she was supposed to be rescuing them from.

Night after night she patrolled the dock area. That she was only five feet tall and weighed about eight stone, and that drunken sailors under the blotchy yellow street lamps—the beer and the songs and the relief from the sea singing in their heads—were just as likely to mistake her for a prostitute and act accordingly, all that did not really worry her. Several times on Sunday evenings she was able, triumphantly, to lead a party of "fallen women" to Snelling's Gospel Mission. Here, if not reformed, at least, for a transient moment, they were transfigured by the thunder and rattle of the full-throated Welsh hymns against the tin roof of the chapel.

She knew, however, that although these experiences strengthened her spirit, they added nothing to her corporeal bank balance. It was becoming increasingly obvious that if she was ever going to get to China—and she was determined to get there in some capacity or other, no matter what anyone might think—she would have to pay her own fare.

THE only way she knew of earning money was to go back into service. An employment agency found her a post in the London household of Sir Francis Younghusband, the eminent soldier, author and explorer. It was ironical perhaps that, as she dusted the books in the library of his stately Belgravia residence, the man who first crossed the heart of Central Asia by traversing the Muztagh, the great mountain barrier between Kashmir and China, was not even conscious of her presence. Yet she was to cross human and geographical terrain as formidable as any he ever faced.

She remembered vividly her entry into the household. Dispirited after the journey from the suburbs of Edmonton, she knocked at the front door, and was shown to her bedroom by the butler. She took out the black, well-thumbed Bible and put it on the dressing-table. She turned out her purse which contained all the money she possessed. There were two pennies and one ha'penny. She placed the coins on top of the Bible. She felt like weeping. She was back where she had started . . . in service . . . and China seemed so far away. And, suddenly conscious of her deep need, she cried out: "Oh God, here's my Bible! Here's my money! Here's me! Use me, God!"

The door opened. A fellow-housemaid poked her heard in. "You Gladys?" she said, and seeing Gladys's nod she went on, "Missus wants to see you in the drawing-room."

Gladys walked slowly down the stairs. Her mistress regarded the small, dejected figure curiously.

"Miss Aylward, isn't it? I hope you'll be happy with me. Now, tell me, how much was your fare from home?"

"Two and ninepence," said Gladys. She did not understand the point of the question.

Her mistress reached for her purse. "I always pay the fares of my maids when I engage them," she said. "Here's three shillings. The housekeeper will explain your duties later. . . ."

Gladys soared back up the stairs. Exultantly, she spread out the three coins on her Bible. The bright silver shone against the black leather cover. Three shillings and twopence ha'penny! All to be hoarded against her fare to China! In spirit she was half-way there.

SHE remembered her first encounter with the ticket people. The elderly booking clerk at Muller's, the travel agency in the Haymarket, was quite certain she was mad. It seemed that in all his years of advising upon the pleasures of foreign travel he had never heard such an outrageous demand. Had he not just finished patiently explaining that the cheapest boat fare to any part of China was £90? Had he not pointed out, in passing, that, *although* the cheapest and quickest route was overland through Europe, Russia and Siberia to Tientsin via the Trans-Siberian Railway—the fare for this journey being only £47 10s.—it was quite impossible to travel by that route? Yet this young person facing him across the counter had chosen deliberately to misunderstand his words. She thrust three £1 notes across at him, said she'd have a ticket on the railway, and would he please accept this on account.

"As I was going to say, madam," he said severely, "the journey by Trans-Siberian Railway is quite impossible because a conflict between Russia and China is raging at the eastern end."

"I couldn't really care about a silly old war," she said. "It's the cheapest way, isn't it? That's what I want. Now if you'll book me a passage, you can have this on account and I'll pay you as much as I can every week."

"We do not," the booking clerk replied, choosing his words with the pedantic care of the extremely irritated, "like to deliver our customers—dead!"

"Oh, they won't hurt me," she said. "I'm a

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Today Gladys Aylward still treasures the Bible which accompanied her on her travels. After years as a missionary in China, she now preaches all over Britain

A PLACE AT TABLE

by ***PHYLLIS BENTLEY***

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE DITTON

A little supper and soft soap wouldn't change Amos's views. Not on your life! He had memories these foreigners would never understand

THE Mayor of Annotsfield, short, stout and shrewd, if a trifle pompous and ungrammatical, rose to address the meeting. "I have called this conference in the council chamber here tonight," he began in his solid Yorkshire tones, "in order to take thought, as you might say, for the welfare of the strangers in our midst."

Old humbug, thought Amos Cainge, angrily.

"Some people call them displaced persons," continued the mayor, "but, of course, the proper name for them is European Voluntary Workers. And, by the way, I can't put that point too strongly, ladies and gentlemen, because we don't want them to feel displaced any more. We want them to become part of our community, and it behoves us—each and every one of us—to try and help them to settle down."

"Hear! Hear!" said a big man with a flower in his buttonhole, lounging in the front row.

That's Walter Egmont, thought Cainge, craning forward to get a better view. *Of course—he would.*

"We want to encourage them to fit into the English way of life" the mayor went on. "Then they'll become a real asset to this country and make a valuable contribution to our life."

"Let 'em join a trade union," whispered Cainge to his neighbour; who nodded. "That's the English way of life."

"Now I know," continued the mayor, "that some people in this town have been upset by a number of disturbing cases coming before our law courts, in which these newcomers have been involved—and, indeed, they've been convicted. These cases only put the point more strongly; that we must do something to make these strangers feel at home with us, or these cases might increase and then where should we be? It would be too little and too late all over again."

"Claptrap!" said Cainge, contemptuously.

"So, in my capacity as mayor of this town, I have invited to this meeting representatives of all the organizations in Annotsfield which are concerned with this problem. Employers, trade unions, churches, social service and welfare organizations, Red Cross and so on. And on the other hand we've invited two representatives from each of the various—er—national groups who we have with us in Annotsfield today."

"'National groups' is good. There's two lots of Poles and two lots of Yugoslavs not on speaking terms with each other," whispered Cainge with relish into his neighbour's ear.

"We have also a few friends here who have travelled in these various countries and can speak some of their languages," said the mayor. "And I hope some really practical suggestions will be put forward at this meeting as to how we can help these strangers in our midst."

Amos was on his feet shouting. "They'll take the bread out of the mouths of English workers"

The mayor sat down. *Old windbag,* thought Cainge.

He glanced round and estimated the volume, length and origin of the applause. All the E.V.W.s clapped with immense fervour, until one of their number, a tall, slender, grey-haired, intelligent-looking chap with a long scar down one side of his face, turned round and smiled deprecatingly at them. On Cainge's right a group of well-dressed, essentially middle-class looking men sitting in the front row—*Wool Textile Employers' Council and such,* thought Cainge with bitterness—gave the mayor's speech solid approval. But the benches round Cainge, occupied by fellow trade unionists, men and women, gave the speech only the few claps necessary to show a decent respect for the town's first citizen; their looks were glum.

The applause ceased and silence supervened.

"The subject is now open for discussion, ladies and gentlemen," said the mayor encouragingly, looking round.

A very thin woman at the back arose. "It seems to me, Mr. Mayor," she said in a clear, acid voice, "that such a great amount is already being done for the E.V.W.s by employers, churches and other similar organizations, that anything this conference might do would only be very small by comparison."

"Aye, that might be so," agreed the mayor, getting up. "But an unofficial, non-political, non-religious body such as this might be better able to do some things than an official organization, you see. By the way, would speakers in future announce their names and the organizations they represent? Of course, we all know Councillor Gladys Soskin," he said, nodding and smiling towards the thin woman, "but if future speakers wouldn't mind—just for the convenience of the meeting."

He sat down, Councillor Soskin thanked him for his convincing explanation, and silence fell again. Then a tall, solid man with a bush of grey hair rose from what Cainge resentfully designated the employers' bench.

"Morcar, Textile Employers' Council," he said. "Would it start the ball rolling, Mr. Mayor, if each group of E.V.W.s told us what they specially lack, what they specially require?"

"That's a very constructive suggestion, Mr. Morcar," said the mayor. "Could our interpreters—and you, Mr. Edelmann, if you will, please—explain to our new citizens what we should like them to tell us?"

At this a babel of outlandish sounds arose, as loud discussions in various Eastern European languages began, accompanied by vigorous gestures.

"I suppose Edelmann is that chap with the scar," said Cainge's neighbour, watching the scene.

"Aye, I suppose," returned Cainge impatiently.

"He's got a name you can pronounce, anyway."

"He's happen Englished his real name so as to take us in, like."

"Aye, happen," agreed the neighbour.

SILENCE having been restored, the mayor addressed each national group in turn. It appeared that the Ukrainians' most urgent want was a priest of their own faith. The Lithuanians, speaking through Mr. Edelmann, wanted a room where they could meet in the evenings and dance.

"We'll make a note of these points and get the committee to investigate," the mayor said. "I'm hoping we shall elect a committee from this meeting to get on with these various suggestions. Now what about the Poles?"

The Poles complained with fire and bitterness about their lodgings. At this, before the mayor could make any comment, the manager of the labour exchange sprang to his feet and cried out with passion that all E.V.W.s were accommodated in hostels on their first arrival. If they moved into lodgings against his advice, and

They plied him with the most elaborate and odd-looking foods. And what made it worse was that neighbours brought in more dishes

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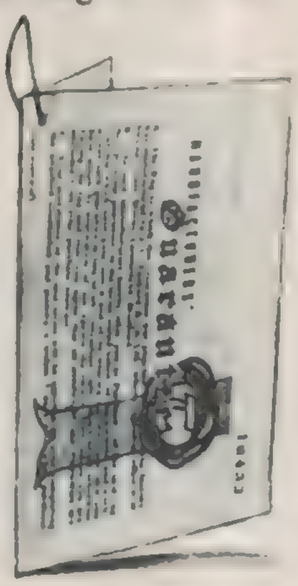

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were cheated, it was entirely their own fault, entirely.

Cainge smiled; the meeting was warming up.

Now it was the Estonians' turn.

"Mr. Edelmann," said the mayor.

Mr. Edelmann rose. He was what women call a handsome fellow, thought Cainge grudgingly; sad-looking but dignified. His forehead was high, his nose long and fine, his grey eyes large and bright. His hands were slender; his cheap clothes somehow sat differently about his shoulders from those of the other E.V.W.s. In fact, he was just the type of man Cainge detested; not a worker; one of those upper middle-class so-and-so's like Walter Egmont—Cainge worked at Egmont's.

"Excuse, please," said Mr. Edelmann, bowing to the mayor and to the meeting.

All this la-di-da stuff! Pulling wool over our eyes! thought George.

"We wish to become good English citizens—good Yorkshire citizens," said Edelmann, with a friendly smile. "But, you see, very difficult for us, because of language."

"The language classes organized for you at the technical college have been very badly attended," said a bald man, springing up. "I beg your pardon, Mr. Mayor. My name is Malhouse, head of the technical college."

"We cannot learn English from teachers who do not know our language, you see," said Edelmann. His smile faded and he looked stern.

"It occurs to me, Mr. Mayor," said Morcar, rising, "that we might get help on this point from the United States, where they have immigrants speaking many different languages. They must know how to tackle the problem."

"It is good idea, very good idea," said Edelmann, smiling and bowing.

The mayor smiled in return. He said: "Is there any other point you wish to bring up, Mr. Edelmann, beside the provision of a large room and better instruction in English?"

"Yes, excuse please, I have one more point, and it is most important point of all," said Edelmann, again looking stern. "You see, we cannot be good Yorkshire citizens when Yorkshire workers not welcome us. They dislike us. They look at us, as you say, down their nose. Not friendly in the mill."

HERE was Cainge's cue. "And why should we look at them friendly like in the mill?" he shouted, jumping to his feet. "Why should we welcome them? They threaten our standard of living, which we've built up after countless years of struggle and sacrifice. What'll happen when the next time of unemployment comes? They'll be kept on because they'll be cheap non-union labour, while we get our cards. They'll take the bread out of the mouths of English workers. You may have forgotten nineteen thirty-one; when one-third of the adult population of this town was on the dole——"

"Nay, I haven't," said Morcar in a tone of great feeling.

"Nor I," said Walter Egmont quietly.

"You seem to have done pretty well out of it all the same," said Cainge, quivering with fury, "judging by the looks of you. You like these foreigners in your mills because they'll accept any hours and any wages you offer them—they've no other choice. Cainge, Trades Council," he added aggressively.

"I like the E.V.W.s because they work hard," said Egmont simply, rising. "They don't know English, so they don't waste time talking."

"That's just what I say," screamed Cainge. "You exploit their need and use their weakness to pull us down."

"The country needs their labour for the export drive," interrupted Morcar. "It's export or expire for England today. If they're not in a union, that's the unions' fault. I'm all for their being admitted by the unions."

"They're thrifty, too," continued Egmont, pursuing his own train of thought. "Some of mine are already buying a house through the building society."

"And that's another thing," shouted Cainge. "These people are buying up slum property and turning it into tenements. Rabbit warrens! And some of the property owners in this town are taking advantage of their ignorance to sell them property which has been condemned."

"Oh, nonsense!" said Egmont with disgust.

"Nay, I'm afraid it's not altogether nonsense, Mr. Egmont," said a long, thin, tired-looking man, uncoiling himself from his bench. "Boother, Citizens' Advice Bureau. I'm afraid I must agree with Mr. Cainge there. I believe there may have been such sales. If only these people would consult us first, before buying."

"I believe I can see some of those property owners here," cried Cainge, looking about him with grim relish.

It was not true, for he did not in fact know who, if any, were these hypothetical abominable property owners, but his remark achieved the effect it intended, namely to cause an uproar. Men shouted hotly at each other and at Cainge, women argued shrilly, the E.V.W.s talked among themselves at the tops of their voices and quarrels arose between groups who had been, after all, traditional enemies through many centuries.

At length, the mayor, by using his gavel, restored order. "Gentlemen! Gentlemen! Ladies and gentlemen! We shall not get far with this way of carrying on," he said reproachfully.

"It's too late for Councillor Cainge to say these E.V.W.s shouldn't have come to England. They've come already, and England's accepted them. Nought remains for us now but to do the best we can for them."

"Hear! Hear!" came from various quarters of the council chamber, but not from Cainge.

"We've made a list—a first list—of their most pressing requirements," went on the mayor, "and now I suggest we proceed to the election of a committee to see how far these wants can be met. I call for nominations."

Several names were at once offered to him.

"I'd like to nominate Mr. Cainge," said Morcar grimly.

At this there was a minor uproar.

"Nomination declined," snapped Cainge.

"Nay! Your point of view should be represented," said Morcar.

"That's true, Amos," said Cainge's neighbour. "We ought to have somebody on, to keep an eye on them."

"Well, I shall have to consult my council," said Cainge, vexed.

"Aye, do. And then notify me," said the mayor.

The committee was elected, and the meeting closed, in a decorous manner, for the West

Continued on page 35

SAPPHIRES ON WEDNESDAY

An exciting new mystery serial

by MALCOLM GAIR

AT first it was just a game . . . a rich woman's whim that made a fabulous assignment for Mark Raeburn, private detective. But then the game turned to murder—and started a hunt through Europe for the significance of the deadly omen of "Sapphires on Wednesday"

IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

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With quick-fire patter Bertram Otto fools party guests—then picks their pockets for fun

Laughter at his fingertips

by *DAVID MILLWOOD*

Otto visits a hospital to give a ventriloquist act. His show also includes magic and singing

At Christmas time, Otto often performs at twelve parties a day, and earns £500 in a week

ONE Saturday night recently, a big blue station wagon became wedged in a traffic jam at Piccadilly Circus. Out jumped a stocky figure of five feet six with slant eyes, long black pigtail and drooping black moustachios. He was clad in an ankle-length green silk robe embroidered with red and gold dragons, and stood for a moment in the neon glare, waving his arms.

Pedestrians gaped. Heads appeared at car windows. "I must get through!" the man cried, in perfect English. Rushing from car to car, he appealed to each driver to make way. "I am a cabaret artist—Ming Chow—here is my card—I have to be at an ambassador's party in ten minutes. Can you please let me through?"

A few minutes later, as the traffic began to move, the "Chinaman" picked up the hem of his robe and rushed back to his car, outwardly agitated but inwardly well pleased. The results of his impromptu appearance bore fruit the following morning when his agent phoned.

"I've had a lot of inquiries, Bertie, about a crazy Chinaman who created a sensation in Piccadilly Circus last night. . . . Got you four bookings on the strength of it."

An expert in engaging and distracting the attention of his fellow men, Bertram George Otto Ernst, alias Ming Chow, alias Uncle Bertie, who is known as Bertram Otto, finds that it pays to travel to work in costume.

"I pick up quite a few engagements by popping up in public places, looking like a comic character out of *Chu Chin Chow*," he says.

Otto, who earns close to £6,000 a year as a party entertainer and has a reputation as the busiest man in his profession, is a voluble, hustling opportunist with twinkling eyes and a keen sense of humour. At society parties he arranges in advance with the host or hostess to be introduced as "His Imperial Highness Ming Chow." The guests bow and curtsy, and discover later that they have paid homage to a commoner who is paid to entertain them.

After performing at the home of Lady Dalrymple-Champneys in Mayfair a few years ago, Otto was asked to stay and drink champagne with the guests. For half an hour he stood chatting with a man who showed an interest in conjuring and magic as a hobby. The other guests began to leave. "They came up and said good night with bows and curtsies. I bowed back, thinking they were getting their own back on me for my introduction. But I was wrong. They were dead serious. My companion turned out to be the Marquis of Carisbrooke, a relative of the Queen."

Otto, ventriloquist, conjurer and comedian, is engaged by royalty, statesmen, the peerage, industrial executives, society women, film stars, office, club and factory party organizers and any private individual who can afford his fees, which range from ten to one hundred guineas. Occasionally, he flies to the Continent to entertain American troops or conference delegates.

At Christmas time, with a diary full of engagements, a fast car in which he snatches a meal and changes costume, he rushes between schools, factories, offices, embassies, hotels, hospitals and private houses in London and the Home Counties. Performing up to twelve times a day—as Uncle Bertie, children's entertainer, in the morning and afternoon, and as Ming Chow, conjurer and pickpocket, in the evening—he is able to earn up to £500 a week in the busy party months of December and January.

He refuses many offers to appear on television. A few weeks ago his agent phoned to say that a wealthy customer had offered one hundred guineas for a top-notch party entertainer. The choice rested between Otto and another artist who was appearing that evening in a television variety programme.

NEXT morning, the agent phoned again. The customer, he said, was impressed by the television act but, as most of his guests had probably seen it also, he had decided to have "that other fellow, Ming Chow."

"TV is no good to me," says Otto. "It pays comparatively poorly and kills my kind of work. When I tried some years ago to get bookings with an animated scene that I had used on Children's Television, people said: 'Haven't you got something else? We've already seen that on TV.'"

Otto's act as Ming Chow, which he has performed all over the world, consists of pickpocketing from his audience cloaked by quick-fire patter, jokes and conjuring. He relies for effect on casually producing the guests' wrist watches, lighters, wallets, handkerchiefs, bow ties, necklaces and bracelets in the course of his conjuring tricks. He has no inhibitions about

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"This man murdered my husband." Laura di Lucca spoke in a flat, dead voice. The gunman whirled round . . .

Angel's Ransom

by ***DAVID DODGE***

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI

Herriot's prisoners were within shouting distance of freedom. . . . Their nightmare voyage would be over—if Blake's desperate gamble came off

FOR three days Herriot, a savage criminal, had dominated the kidnapped yacht Angel. Now he was ordering it in to the coast of Monaco, to a rendezvous with his accomplice Roche. He did not know yet that Roche was in the hands of the police. When he found out, he was bound to start shooting. . . .

But Blake, the captain of the Angel, knew about Roche—and he was desperately worried. Freddy Farr, his American millionaire employer, had been forced by Herriot to make out a cheque for one hundred thousands dollars, payable to Roche. Then Freddy confided to Blake that a code-mark on the cheque would send Roche straight to jail.

The code worked. Neyrolle, the Monaco police *sous-chef*, was busy on the case, helped by George Samson, a British journalist. They knew that only a surprise attack on Herriot would rescue Freddy Farr alive.

And there were others in danger. Aboard the Angel was Marian Ellis, the English girl tricked by Herriot into helping him to seize the yacht. She and Blake had drawn very close together.... And there were Valentina Walowska, Freddy's beautiful girl friend, and Laura di Lucca, stunned and apathetic after seeing Herriot murder her husband.

Now, on the bridge of the Angel, Herriot, his man Jules, and Blake were staring through a roaring gale towards the spot where Roche was due to signal. They could see nothing. "Go in closer," barked Herriot.

Blake reached for the throttle. Time was running out. When Herriot learned that he was beaten, he would turn viciously against his prisoners. Then Blake would have to tackle him himself—even if it meant a bullet.

He felt very much alone. He had no way of knowing that, ashore, the Monaco police were also planning a desperate move. . . .

FINAL INSTALMENT

Laura Has Her Revenge

THE urgent voice of his assistant, Corsi, brought Neyrolle awake. "Something's happening on the radar," Corsi exclaimed. His oilskins dripped water in the doorway of the Bureau du Pilotage. The time was a few minutes after 2 a.m.; the storm still raged outside.

Neyrolle blinked and rubbed his eyes. He had been dozing fitfully in his chair since midnight. George Samson, who still insisted on being in at the kill for the sake of his exclusive story, was sound asleep in the same room, snoring. Neyrolle hesitated to wake him. He was not interested in George's story, but George would be useful when things came to a showdown.

A patrol boat mounting a fifty-millimetre swivel gun stood by in the harbour to be used against the Angel as a last resort, but Neyrolle was going to try more subtle tactics first. For this reason he had a small pilot boat awaiting his orders. He intended to take her within hailing distance when the Angel came in, ostensibly to offer pilotage into the harbour.

This Herriot would be bound to refuse, but by that time the pilot boat, with Neyrolle and his armed assistants on board, would be within shooting distance. The only difficulty was that they had to know whom to shoot at. George Samson knew the yacht's passengers, and it was for this reason that Neyrolle had reluctantly agreed to find room for him on the pilot boat.

Neyrolle shook George awake. "There is a vessel in the harbour equipped with radar," he said tersely. "Corsi tells me that something has been sighted on her screen. We must investigate. Hurry!"

"You're a dark horse," George grumbled. "I didn't know anything about this radar boat."

"You know now," Neyrolle said. . . .

In the wheelhouse of a British yacht the luminescent green sweep of a radar screen rotated and throbbed, painting its shadowy picture of what lay around them in the night. The storm filmed the screen with a mistiness that did not hide a small, more solidly defined shadow lying motionless well out towards the periphery of the scanner's circle.

Neyrolle lit a Gauloise. In the glow of the match his expression betrayed nothing of what he felt. He said: "What's her distance?"

In the darkness a voice answered: "We're ranging at two miles now, so she's about a mile and three-quarters out."

"How long has she been there?"

"We picked her up at ten miles around one o'clock. She came in to where you see her now in the next hour, then lay to."

Corsi said: "She's coming in. Look."

They watched the shadow blur, elongate and re-form again, a green caterpillar crawling. It moved by fractions of an inch for some minutes, then stopped.

"Is there any way to identify a vessel by what is visible on your screen?" asked Neyrolle.

"You can guess at her dimensions," said the man at the radar. "That's about all."

"Please guess the dimensions of this one."

"Well, it's not easy. I'd say perhaps between fifty feet and two hundred."

"Thank you," Neyrolle said. "Could you also perhaps guess the meaning of her manœuvres?"

"Well, if it were any other kind of a night, I'd say she was trying to find an anchorage in water too deep for her. In this storm only a silly clot would ever think of anchoring on a lee shore. She ought either to come into port or stand out to sea."

"Might she be looking for a signal from shore, or preparing to launch a small boat?"

"She might."

"If she did launch a boat, would we be able to see it?"

For a moment the silence was broken only by the throb and click of the scanner. The voice said doubtfully: "I shouldn't care to say, at two miles. It would depend on the size of the boat. Hold up a minute."

There was a movement in the dark, a click. The picture on the scope lost its luminescence, fading as another formed in larger dimensions. The band of the sea wall was wider now, farther from the centre of the screen, and filled more of it. The caterpillar shadow had disappeared.

"That's a one-mile range," the voice said. "You could see anything larger than a dinghy, perhaps even a dinghy, on that scale. And no one who wasn't completely crackers would try to row anything as small as a dinghy tonight, so the answer is yes, you could probably spot a boat coming in. Unless you wanted to keep an eye on the other craft at the same time."

"For the moment, we wish to observe the behaviour of the other craft," Neyrolle said.

The switch clicked again. The first picture returned to the screen. On it, the caterpillar shadow had begun to move once more. It inched its slow way shorewards, stopped, inched forwards again, and then turned back. Reaching the position where it had been when they first saw it, it was motionless for almost an hour before it crept again towards the centre of the screen, and the cycle of its withdrawal and return was repeated once more in the hour following.

Afterwards it crawled towards the edge of the screen and disappeared. The unseen operator of

Continued on page 38

Blake told Freddy his part in the plan. "We've got a chance," he added. "That's all I can say"

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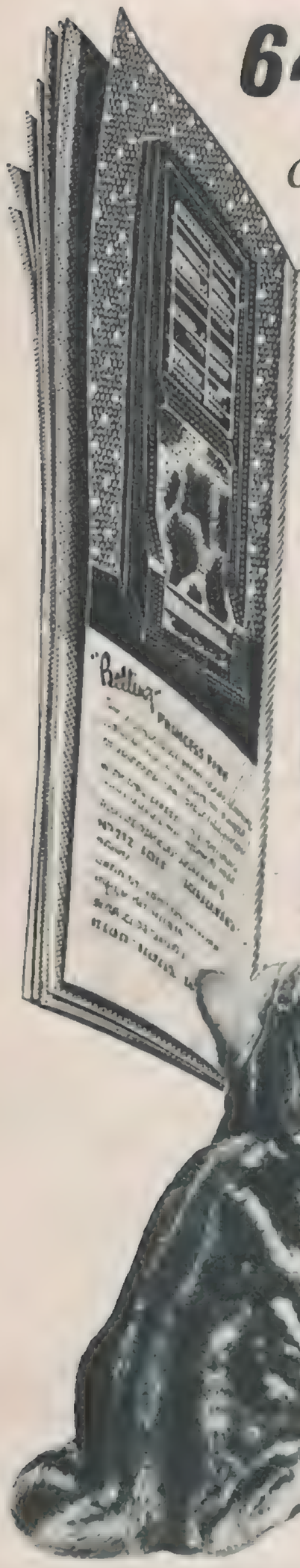

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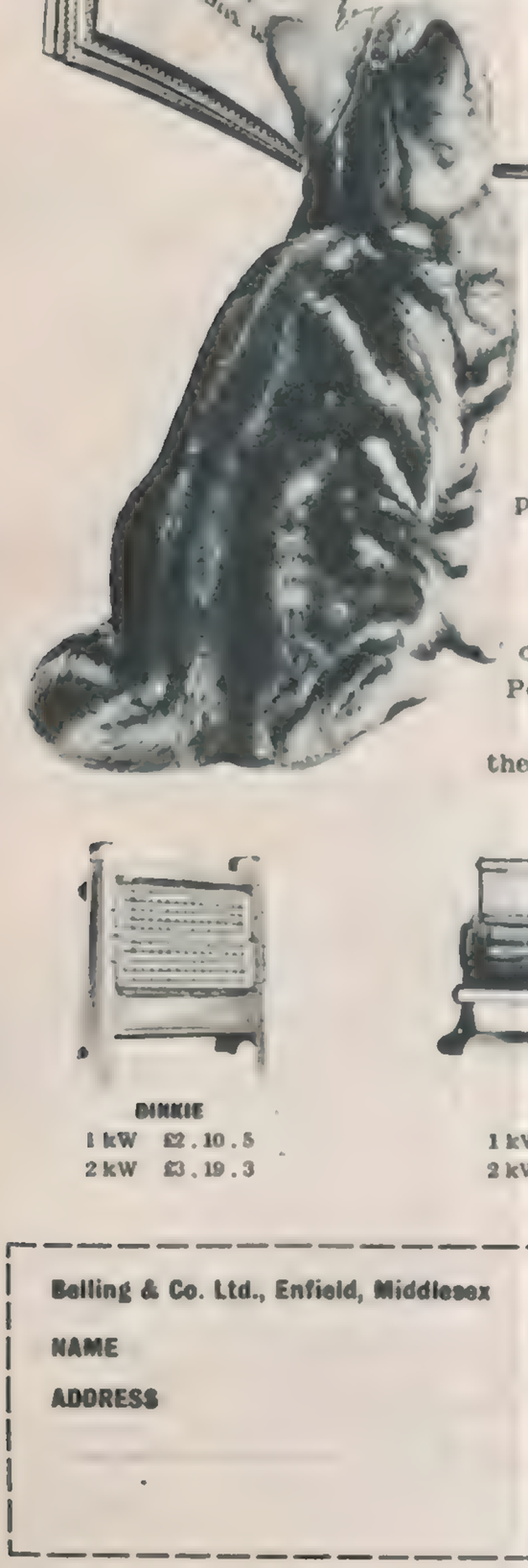

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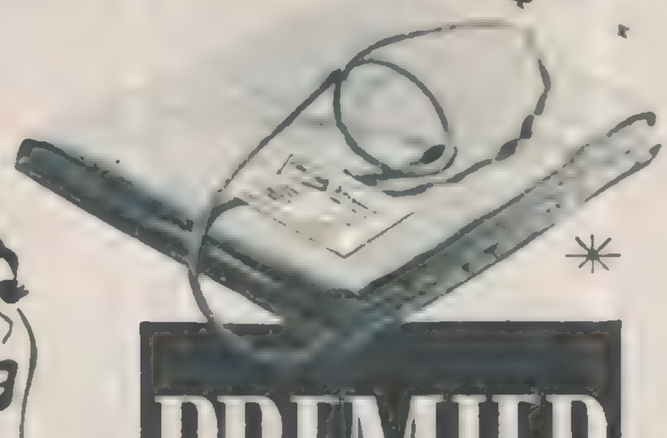

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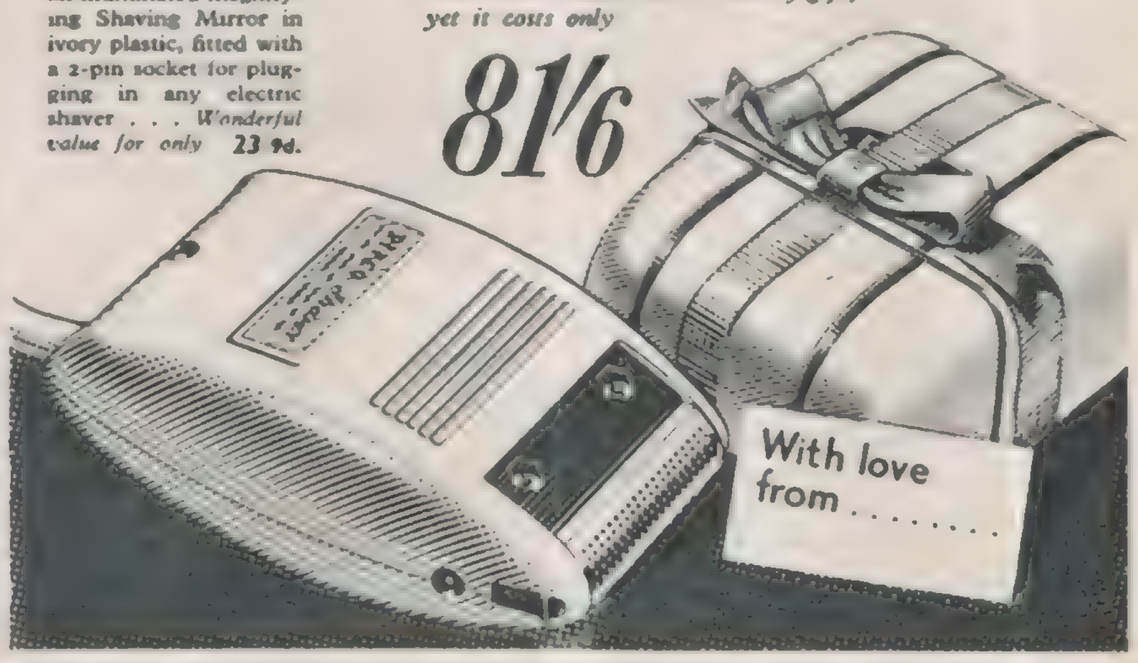

The battle to save your smile

Scientists are fighting dental decay—by tests on drinking water and banning sweets between meals

by KEITH ELLIS

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPH BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

Dentists once doubted the value of brushing the teeth. Tests proved that it is essential

FOR four years between 1948 and 1952, a slim dental researcher named Geoffrey Slack examined the teeth of children in Liverpool's day nurseries. He wanted to find out how much decay there was and whether it varied from year to year.

As senior lecturer in preventive dentistry at the University of Liverpool he knew that dental decay or caries was the most widespread disease afflicting mankind. It is found in all periods of history and in almost every country in the world. In Britain it attacks almost everybody. Of the recruits entering the British Forces during the war, ninety-seven out of every hundred had active caries.

Apart from the misery of toothache, the effect on general health and time wasted in the dentist's chair, dental treatment is one of the costliest items in the National Health Service. Last year the nation spent nearly £17 million on fillings and another £2,400,000 on extractions. In the first five years of the National Health Service the cost of dentures totalled £90 million. An authority has calculated that in a few years' time one out of every six Britons will be wearing dentures. Nearly a half of the wearers will be under the age of forty-five. This will be a higher proportion than in any other country.

Slack was not surprised to find that at the age of five each of the children he examined had on average five decayed teeth. What puzzled him was the changing proportion of children with no decay at all. For three out of the four years it remained constant. But in 1949 it dropped sharply.

He cast about for a reason. Then he remembered that for a short time in 1949 sweets had been off the ration and there had been such an orgy of sweet eating that rationing had been reimposed.

A trained scientist, not given to jumping to conclusions, he wrote in his report: "It is interesting to consider whether the quantities of sweets obtained by these children were sufficient to produce changes in the oral environment which hastened the carious process."

HIS assumption fits in with previous knowledge. Caries is a disease of civilization. As man has substituted soft, starchy foods for raw meat, vegetables and coarse-ground flour, he has suffered more and more from toothache. Archaeologists have shown that in Stone Age skulls only three in a hundred teeth were decayed. By the Roman Conquest the number had risen to more than twenty-eight. But when the Anglo-Saxons brought back less civilized foods it dropped again to sixteen.

In modern primitive peoples the process has only recently started. In the remote South Atlantic island of Tristan da Cunha, British naval observers reported in 1932 that the decay rate was eighteen per thousand. At that time the natives lived mainly on fish and potatoes. Their only contact with the outside world was a boat every two years.

Later, a development corporation entered the island to collect crawfish for the United States market. It set up a canteen and sold flour, sugar, sweets and starchy foods. By 1952 the decay rate had risen to ninety-one per thousand.

Most dentists agree on the cause of decay. After a meal microscopic fragments of carbohydrate foods such as sugar and flour stick to the teeth. Bacteria, present in almost every mouth, produce substances called enzymes, which act on the carbohydrates to form an acid. The acid attacks the enamel of the tooth.

Once the enamel has been breached the bacteria seep into the dentine (the human equivalent of the elephant's ivory) which forms the bulk of the tooth. If not stopped by proper treatment they penetrate the pulp, a bundle of nerves and blood vessels at the centre of the tooth. The result is raging toothache.

Dentists believe that the acid attacks are sharp and short. They reach their peak about two minutes after the food has been eaten and continue for half an hour or more. Eventually saliva washes the acid away. Without saliva decay would be total. One middle-aged man with a good set of teeth had his salivary glands paralysed by a stroke. Within four weeks he lost every tooth.

Present research aims to break the chain of events which causes decay. Scientists are working on methods of killing off the bacteria or inhibiting the enzymes.

Until recently many dentists doubted whether brushing did anything but leave a pleasant taste in the mouth. They said that the particles which did the damage were lodged in nooks and fissures inaccessible to the toothbrush. Then a quiet, bald American professor called Leonard S. Fosdick experimented with 946 of his students at Chicago's Northwestern University. For two years 423 of them brushed their teeth in the usual way at night and in the morning. The rest brushed their teeth within ten minutes of every meal or, when this was impossible, rinsed their mouths with water.

At the end of twelve months the first group had developed an average of 2.2 cavities each. The second group had developed only .8. Twelve months later the second group had less than half as many new cavities as the first.

Dentists now emphasize the necessity of brushing the teeth after every meal. If this is impossible plain water should be forced between the teeth and swallowed, three times. Cleaning the teeth before breakfast is pointless, except to freshen the mouth. And taking

Continued on page 52

Harry Gordon Selfridge brought to Britain a bold and brilliant technique in department store decoration . . .

. . . and began a revolution in window dressing which attracted the attention of passers-by. His clean, simple décor set a standard for present-day window displays

Selfridge walked up and down Oxford Street watching shoppers in action before he built his store there. He planned every detail of it himself

JOHN BULL COLOUR PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTHUR WHITTINGTON

NO NAME ON THE DOOR (3)

by A. H. WILLIAMS

To leading a gay life — £2,000,000

In business Gordon Selfridge was a genius who made millions. But he spent them all—on women and gambling. He squandered a fortune in eight hectic years

ONE of the top stage stars of the period before and shortly after the first World War was Gaby Deslys. How she came to sing, dance and grimace her way through the barbed-wire entanglements of Harry Gordon Selfridge's puritanism, I have no means of knowing. He may have met her when she first appeared in London, shocking the town not only with her French naughtiness on the stage, but also with her business-like attitude to the young bloods who invited her to supper.

Fred Wright, who managed her during her first appearance in London, was alarmed when he discovered that she had a cut-and-dried tariff for stage-door Johnnies who requested the pleasure of her company in public.

When Wright told her that that sort of thing wasn't done in England, that it could create misunderstanding and might be bad for her reputation, Gaby was outraged and inveighed against people who couldn't see the difference between business and pleasure. But he did finally convince her of the unwisdom of charging young Guards officers a fee for having supper with her.

Selfridge had a curiously juvenile attitude towards stage people. A showman by instinct and training, he responded sensitively to the atmosphere of the theatre and was entranced by its successful personalities; and Gaby Deslys was one of the greatest of them. But he was no young Guards officer with a flushed face, nervously handing his visiting card to the stage-door keeper with a half-sovereign tip. He was one of the greatest merchants in London, occupier of the aristocratic Lansdowne House and of Highcliffe Castle, Hampshire, associate and friend of some of the wealthiest men of his time. In the few years since he had launched his great store in Oxford Street he had revolutionized shopping for British women. Gaby was a business woman; Selfridge was a business man.

He had no illusions about human nature.

"Whenever anyone enters this office, Williams," he once said, "I ask myself—what do they want out of me? I have trained myself to ask that question. It keeps matters in their true perspective."

I doubt, though, whether he ever applied that test to Gaby. If he had, he would have saved himself a lot of money, a lot of fruitless journeys to and from France, a lot of dignity, and perhaps a lot of heartache.

He found her a house in Kensington Gore. She had the run of his office and the store's goods. Her demands on his time were heavy, those on his cheque book heavier. The affair was discreetly managed in the early stages, though it became an open secret later.

On a visit to France with Selfridge, shortly after the 1918 Armistice, I went with him to the Folies Bergère. We had seats in the front row of the stalls. Word that Selfridge was in the house must have been passed round to Mistinguett, for in the middle of her performance she stopped and walked to the edge of the stage, glancing along the stalls. Then she bent forward, winked, and said in broken English:

"Hallo, Harry, how's Gaby?"

Selfridge turned to me sharply.

"What's that? What did she say, Williams? Did she mention my name?"

This was a moment for diplomacy. I temporized. "I didn't catch it, Mr. Selfridge. My French isn't very good."

He gave me a look full of suspicion. He had heard all right. What worried him was the likelihood that I had heard, too, and, although he didn't refer to the matter again, his manner towards me was rather constrained for the rest of the evening. . . .

This was a time of tremendous effort at the store. His energy was almost frightening. His private secretariat of five was kept hard at it from early in the morning until late in the evening. Then there might be a first-night at one of the West End theatres, followed by a supper at Lansdowne House. For at this period the pace of his social life was quickening, and there was seldom an evening free of engagements.

He ate enormously, smoked two cheroots a day, but drank nothing stronger than water. Exercise was largely limited to his tours of inspection of the store. He had little or no interest in sport, though I have known him play a round of golf dressed in black jacket and striped trousers and starched collars and cuffs.

HIS fitness had a mental and moral rather than a physical basis. In those days he was complete master of his nerves. His occasional outbursts of irritation were generally assumed for business reasons.

But on one occasion Gaby lost her pet dog in or near the store. Instantly, the whole Selfridge organization was swung into the search. The police were informed; notices were sent to the newspapers offering a large reward to the finder; members of the store's dispatch department were ordered to scour the neighbouring streets; "lost" bills were printed for distribution to the public; and sandwich-men were pressed into service. All through the search Selfridge sat in his office like a general commanding an army, scrutinizing reports from the front.

"This is a serious business, Williams," he

Gordon Selfridge was reputed to have spent tens of thousands of pounds on jewellery for Gaby Deslys, a famous French stage star

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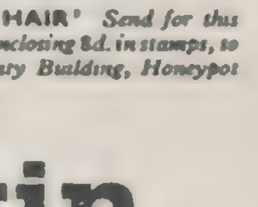

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Jenny Dolly, the American actress, and Gordon Selfridge gambled in Europe's casinos. He covered their losses—she kept the winnings

said, when he instructed me to use our advertising and publicity service for the job. "The dog must be found."

The grief-stricken Gaby had returned home and was telephoning Selfridge every quarter of an hour or so. As reports poured in from the unsuccessful searchers, his blue-grey eyes glittered behind his pince-nez, his voice took on a hectoring tone, and his fist began to crash on the desk. Neither before nor since did I ever see him so put out.

This lost dog was obviously a challenge to his power. Although he was fond of dogs, it was not the animal that mattered, but his reputation in the eyes of Gaby.

Night fell and there was no dog. The next morning there was still nothing to report.

The chief looked grim and grey. "Somebody has stolen that dog, Williams," he said. "Double the reward."

This was a stroke of good luck for a servant girl who worked in a house near Manchester Square. The previous afternoon she had heard a dog whining in the area and taken it in. It was not until the following day, towards noon, that she saw one of our notices.

She came in with the dog in her arms. I took her to the chief's office.

He walked round, inspecting the animal, then suddenly called it by a pet name. The dog reared and struggled in the girl's arms. She handed it to Selfridge.

He turned to me. "Mr. Williams, will you please hand this lady the reward? The increased amount offered this morning." Then to the girl: "Madame, I give you my personal thanks."

The affair with Gaby Deslys was costly. Tens of thousands of pounds were spent, report said, on jewellery and gems at a famous Paris house. Even if the amount is cut by half, it was more than enough, considering the demands of the store for more capital to meet the cost of new building and to finance expanding trade during the short-lived boom that followed the end of the war.

So much money went into advertising and publicity that Selfridge had to conduct operations on extended credits. This was responsible for many rumours concerning the unsoundness of the business; but there was really never any doubt about his ability to induce suppliers to grant him special credit facilities. Some of them had learned to fear Selfridge's bold move of making purchases direct from manufacturers.

GORDON SELFRIDGE'S character underwent a marked change in the middle 1920s. While his control of the store's affairs never for a moment relaxed, his absences became more frequent, and as weekends approached he was less tense than usual. On the other hand, he had strange outbursts of irritability, especially when he was kept in London between Friday night and Monday morning.

The business was running smoothly. In less than twenty years the store had become a national institution.

There were certainly financial problems which were acute from time to time, when credit conditions became more stringent. In store business this is a common state of affairs; but Gordon Selfridge had a reputation in the trade for delaying settlement of accounts long after creditors had registered surprise that their demands had been unaccountably overlooked.

This did not imply any unsoundness of Selfridge's position; it was his way of doing business.

He was taking £50,000 a year for himself out of the business, and spending every halfpenny of it; worse, he was getting deeper and deeper into debt. The rent of Lansdowne House was £5,000 a year; its upkeep, including the magnificent parties he often gave, probably twice as much. The rent and upkeep of Highcliffe Castle, his country residence in Hampshire, may have consumed another £10,000. Then there were his land purchases. Among these was the acquisition of Hengistbury Head, on which he planned to build a castle.

"I have bought a part of England, Williams," he told me proudly.

By nature he was an emotional—at times a sentimental—man. What he lacked was a balancing humour. He could not laugh at himself. He was a man of simple personal tastes. He never contributed to charities; he did not believe in them. In his view, work alone justified life.

But large sums of money were squandered on the love affairs of his old age. One relationship lasted for nearly ten years. The lady was Jenny Dolly, one of the Dolly Sisters who came to London in the early twenties to star in a revue called *Jigsaw*. Jenny and her sister Rosie were alike as two newly minted coins, and had the same hard brightness. Their success on the West End stage was immediate, though they retired before they had time to consolidate their conquest of London audiences.

Both were dark, petite and dynamic. Their humour was broad, their laughter uninhibited. They came here from America where life was less restrained than in Mayfair. In fact, Jenny never felt at home in London, and as soon as she retired from the stage she went to live in a villa at Fontainebleau, which was within reasonable distance of the bright lights of Paris. But although Fontainebleau was now Jenny's home, she had lived too long in vaudeville to settle down to a quiet domestic life in one place.

In France she moved between Monte Carlo, Cannes, Vichy, Deauville and Le Touquet, sometimes accompanied by members of her family. Gordon Selfridge joined her fairly regularly at weekends and on the brief holidays he took from his work at the store, travelling by aeroplane to save time; for he was an addict of aviation.

WHAT could they have in common—this grave, elderly merchant prince, with a head full of high-minded proverbs and business dreams, and this restless young woman whose life was an unbroken round of parties?

There is one obvious answer, though it may explain only one aspect of the relationship—gambling. Jenny Dolly loved the French casinos and so did Selfridge.

After the affair with Jenny Dolly had begun, he became a changed character. The excitement he obviously found in her company was carried over to his office. There were times when he appeared to be under emotional stress, especially when circumstances made it impossible for him to make the weekend trip to France.

The store and its contents, as well as Selfridge's cheque book, seemed to be at Jenny Dolly's disposal. When she was in London, she seldom visited Oxford Street, but she received

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"Christmas?" said Muldoon. "It's part of the racket." Then he fell for . . .

That Special Magic

by ***ROBERT HOLMES***

ILLUSTRATED BY BATCHELOR

MICHAEL MULDOON wiped his paint brush on a piece of waste rag and stepped back. His air of concentration gave way to a broad smile. "Well, now, what do you think of that, Happy?" he said. "Would you ever have seen a better Santa?"

Happy Williams, Muldoon's grey-haired and lugubrious assistant, scratched his chin thoughtfully. "Pop a bit more red on his nose," he suggested.

"Indeed I will not," said Muldoon. "D'ye want him to look an ould boozer? 'Tis a fine, healthy Santa I've been painting, and a fine, healthy nose he has."

Slightly mortified, he turned to look again at his handiwork—a double-crown poster soon to be displayed in the window. MULDOON'S MIGHTY MOTOR MART was the heading, in bold red letters. Underneath was a smiling Father Christmas holding aloft a huge sack, and on the sack more red lettering proclaimed: *Special Xmas Offer — Free Tax! Free Insurance! Six Months' Guarantee with every car! PLUS free driving lessons if required!!!*

It was the work of an artist, Muldoon conceded. If the used-car trade had not been so profitable, he might by now have been Muldoon, R.A. . . .

He gave a small sigh for all that posterity had lost and snapped back to normal. "Before you put that in the window, Happy," he said, "mark each car up thirty."

"*Thirty?*" Happy was startled.

"Why not?" Muldoon said. "It's Christmas. Lots of cash about."

"Yes, but. . . ." Happy hesitated, looking particularly mournful. "Well, it doesn't hardly seem fair. I mean, not at Christmas."

"Fair?" Muldoon echoed. "*Fair?* Everybody makes money at Christmas—except the suckers, of course. That's what it's for. It's part of the racket, so who wants to be fair?"

He gathered breath to continue, but at that moment the bell on his desk gave a tinkle. Someone had entered the showrooms. Muldoon straightened his tie and hurried out. Happy stared glumly at the poster, then crossed to the window overlooking the showrooms.

It was always interesting to watch Muldoon working on a customer. He had an Irish charm, a glibly persuasive tongue and a complete lack of scruples. Muldoon could have made a good living selling gumboots to bedouin Arabs.

Muldoon was approaching this customer—a girl whose head and shoulders were buried inside a small saloon—from the rear; a rear, Happy noticed, that was quite uncommonly trim and shapely. She seemed unaware of Muldoon's approach, but as he began speaking she straightened and turned towards him. . . .

Happy whistled softly. She had a small, heart-shaped face framed vividly against close-cut black hair. She was tiny, slim, with a jauntily uptilted nose, and even from this distance Happy could see the blueness of her eyes and the flashing whiteness of her smile.

Muldoon, too, felt himself rock slightly on his heels. What he had said was: "Good morning, madam. That's a fine little car you have your head in." But when she turned round he forgot that he had spoken. He forgot that he could speak. He forgot his name, his address and even the size of his bank account.

Automatically he muttered again: "Good morning, madam," and stood goggling. She was a vision; a snorter; a corker. She was Helen of Troy fitted with twin carburettors and a supercharger.

The girl pointed to a rakish red sports car and her lips moved. As well to have spoken in Serbo-Croat. "Good morning, madam," Muldoon said, struggling for breath.

The girl stepped back a yard. "Is this a joke?" she asked warily. "We've agreed it's a good morning—remember?"

This time the sense of her words percolated. Muldoon made a tremendous effort to collect himself. "Indeed, we have, indeed," he exclaimed heartily. "A fine, bright, wonderful morning it is. The most joyful morning there's ever been, or may I never see another."

The girl looked startled; then laughed lightly. "Are you always so cheerful, Mr.—er—?"

"Muldoon is the name; Michael Fitzherbert Muldoon."

"I am Molly Regan," the girl said, smiling. "I'm afraid I don't have a grand middle name."

"Molly Regan," Muldoon repeated devoutly. *Molly! Molly. . . !* "Why, what grander name could there be than that? 'Tis a beautiful name, Miss Regan."

"Thank you," Molly said. She waved a hand round at the ranked cars. "Is this your business, then, Mr. Muldoon?"

"It is mine to the last little mortgage," Muldoon assured her.

"Is it now?" Molly looked greatly impressed. Her brogue was faint but clear and Muldoon warmed to her. *It takes the old country,* he told himself, *to make 'em as pretty as this. . . .*

"You're very young to have got so much," Molly was saying.

Muldoon made a deprecatory gesture. Thankfully, he realized that his heart was at last settling back in its old place, which was quite near his wallet.

"Would you be interested in that model?" he asked, nodding towards the car she had been examining. "'Tis a rare bargain."

"Really?"

"I'll tell you why it's so cheap, Miss Regan." An expression of limpid honesty crossed Muldoon's face. "You see, it belonged to a friend of mine who's just come into a fortune. As

Muldoon gaped. M

lly was proudly holding up an ermine-trimmed cape and a long, white beard. . . . And she obviously expected him to wear them

soon as he left the solicitor, he drove straight round here and left the car where it is now 'Mike,' he said to me, 'Mike, money means nothing to me any more. I'd be very much obliged if you'd just give the car away for what ye can get.'"

"Well, that was very nice of him," Molly said, "but to be truthful, Mr. Muldoon, I want a big strong sort of car."

"A big car, you say?" Muldoon snapped his fingers triumphantly. "Then I've just the thing for you, Miss Regan. Now come over here and feast your eyes on this superb limousine. Just look at that wonderful coachbuilt body—and the engine is like a piece of silk." He opened a door. "Real cowhide upholstery, carpets an inch thick. . . . For sheer luxury you won't find better in the whole of London. And only eight hundred."

"It's only done eight hundred miles?"

"No—um—a little more than that," Muldoon said. "I mean it's only eight hundred pounds."

Molly gasped. "Eight *hundred?*"

"Well, I might let it go for seven-fifty."

"Mr. Muldoon," Molly said sweetly, "I'm wasting your time. I can't afford to pay any thing like that."

"No?" Muldoon stroked his nose ruminatively. He had the air of a man ready to listen to any reasonable offer. "Well—er—how much were you wanting to pay?"

"Seventy-five pounds," Molly said promptly

Muldoon started to laugh, saw that she wasn't joking, and slowly closed his mouth. For a moment he studied her in silence. "Well!" he said finally. "Well, well!" He looked at his fingernails.

"I—I know it's not much."

"Hah!" said Muldoon harshly. "So you know that it's not much. And just what sort of car would you be wanting for *seventy-five pounds?*"

"I told you." Molly's chin came up defiantly, but her lips were beginning to tremble. "I want a big one."

Muldoon gazed over her pretty head and sneered. "How big?" he asked sarcastically.

"Big enough to hold seven or eight small boys."

"*What?*" Muldoon glanced incredulously at her left hand. As he had thought, there was no ring on her third finger.

"I want to take my cubs for rides," Molly said.

"Your *cubs?*" Muldoon shook his head hopelessly. "I give up."

"Wolf Cubs—junior Boy Scouts," Molly explained. "You see, I'm the pack mistress at the Orphans' Home. That is, I'm a teacher really, but I run the cubs as well."

"Aha, I know 'em!" Muldoon nodded. "Little beggars in green jerseys!" Privately, he wondered why such a ravishing creature should waste her time on a bunch of kids who were all far too young to appreciate her finer points. He checked those points himself again.

" . . . nothing at the price. I'll have to look somewhere else," he heard Molly saying. She began to move away.

"Wait!" Muldoon said desperately. He couldn't let her go yet. "I've just remembered something. A—a kind of shooting brake."

Even the memory of it hurt. He had acquired it in an unguarded and bibulous

moment last St. Patrick's Day, since when it had been rusting in the backyard—to have had that monstrous hulk inside would not only have lowered the high tone of Muldoon's showrooms, but would have punctured his self-esteem.

"If you'll come this way, please," Muldoon said.

He led Molly out to the yard. The vehicle he had euphemistically termed "shooting-brake," crouching on flat tyres by the dustbins, was rimed with frost. Small icicles hung from the mudguards.

"It looks a bit battered," Molly said.

"Och, a dab of paint would soon put the outside right," Muldoon said airily. He wrenched open the driver's door. "Look—as big as a bus inside. And you'll notice how lavishly equipped she is. Each seat has a separate ashtray and——"

"My cubs don't smoke," Molly said coldly.

"Then they can use them for toffee papers. The mechanical condition is really first-class. This model has one of the most reliable——"

"How much?"

"——motors ever. . . . Ah! Well, now, I would have been asking a hundred guineas," Muldoon said, "but to a girl from Cork——"

"Limerick," Molly said, "on the banks of the Shannon."

"Well," said Muldoon, "to a girl from Limerick, bejabers and begorrah, I'd ask no more than seventy-five pounds. Cash." He smiled magnanimously.

Molly looked at him. She said: "I begin to see, Mr. Muldoon, how you've got so much so young. I'll give you sixty."

Muldoon hesitated, looking again at the shooting-brake, which was ugly, and then at the girl, who was pretty. He grinned. "All right—you can have it for sixty and call me Santa. Let's go into the office."

They went back through the showrooms to the office. Muldoon offered Molly a chair and watched avidly as she produced a roll of bank-notes from her bag. She counted off fifteen and put the rest on his desk.

"I've been saving for this all the year," she said. Her eye was caught by Muldoon's poster. "Gosh! Free tax and insurance!"

"No!" Muldoon cried vehemently.

Molly gazed at him in astonishment. "What do you mean—'no'?"

"That's a mistake. It—it doesn't mean what it says."

"Oh? What does it mean, then?"

"It means . . . well, it means something else. It's a mistake," Muldoon repeated hopelessly.

Molly's eyes flashed with sudden anger. She stabbed a finger at the poster. "You mean I wasn't meant to see that, don't you? I suppose your 'Special Xmas Offer' only applies to people who spend hundreds of pounds on your rotten cars? Well, I think you're a—a beastly old skinflint!"

Muldoon winced, avoiding the hot accusation in her eyes. A terrible battle was being fought in his breast. More than anything else he found himself wanting to please her. But this was *money*. This was *business*.

He shuddered, passed a trembling hand over his face, and a decade of devotion to Mammon began to crack at the edges.

"Miss Regan, as it's your first business with the firm," he said hoarsely, "I think I could possibly. . . . Well, dammit, you can have free tax and insurance."

Happy, lounging in the background, stiffened with surprise. Molly jumped up from her chair and threw her arms around Muldoon. She gave him a spanking kiss on the chin. "I knew no true Dublin fellow would be mean at Christmas," she said. "Of course, I get the six months' guarantee, don't I?"

Muldoon looked at her bitterly. He thought of the deplorable state of the shooting-brake and the repair bills that, without a doubt, would flood in on him. Then he thought of the softness of Molly's lips and the fragrance of the hair that had brushed his nose a second before. "Yes," he said.

Happy Williams sniggered. Muldoon rounded on him fiercely. "The shooting-brake is sold," he snapped. "Give it a good wash and polish. Clean the inside. Charge the battery. Pump the tyres. Grease——"

Wraithlike, Happy slipped from the room. Muldoon glowered after him, perfectly aware that his assistant was seeking the peace of the Lord Nelson's saloon bar. Turning back to Molly, he caught an oddly thoughtful gleam in her eyes. But the gleam disappeared and she smiled brightly. "What about the free driving lessons?" she said.

MULDOON's heart leaped with joy, like a spring salmon. This time he did not hesitate. "Oh, to be sure!" he said. "I give those. Let me put you down for a course of fifty—to begin with."

"Fifty lessons? But that's ridiculous!"

"Well, I wouldn't like to rush you into the driving test," Muldoon said smugly. "Some people need a lot of instruction. I always say that only practice, and—why, what's the matter?" Molly's face had crumpled in dismay. "Is something wrong?"

"I've just *got* to be able to drive by Christmas," Molly said.

"Good heavens—that's only a couple of weeks," Muldoon said, shocked. "It's just not possible. Even if I *could* teach you to drive in a few days, you still couldn't take the test."

"But, Mr. Muldoon, you don't understand. I've promised to take the cubs to Harwood for Christmas." Molly's voice trembled. She bit her bottom lip. "I *must* take them."

"Well, you're not allowed to drive unless you have a qualified driver with you. So I'm afraid you can't take them. . . . Of course, if one of your cubs holds a licence——"

"It's nothing to joke about!"

Muldoon stopped grinning. After a moment he said: "Where is Harwood?"

"That's the name of my aunt's house in Buckinghamshire," Molly said. "She's spending the winter with my cousin in Capetown, and she said I could take the boys to Harwood for Christmas. It's a lovely old place—they'd adore it."

"What were you going to do there?" Muldoon was intrigued.

"I wanted to give them a real, old-fashioned kind of Christmas in a *family* atmosphere. Even today's orphanages are not. . . . Well, you can't have very much fun with a background of that kind."

A vague memory of Oliver Twist sipping gruel entered Muldoon's mind. He nodded sympathetically.

"Oh, what shall I tell them? I just can't let them down." Molly's face puckered again. "I've ordered all the f-food and—and everything."

"Hoy!" Muldoon said in alarm. He took out his handkerchief. "Don't cry. Here, look now—give your nose a good blow, eh?"

Molly snuffled. She accepted the handkerchief and blew her nose hard. "You're awfully kind, Mr. Muldoon——" Her eyes glistened with sudden hope. "*You'll* be going away for Christmas, I suppose?"

"Not me," Muldoon said. "I like being in London at Christmas——" He stopped, suddenly appalled. "No!" he cried.

"Oh, please!" Molly said. "You could drive us down——"

"I couldn't," Muldoon said wildly. "I can't stand children—boys especially! I . . . I have blackouts when I'm near them. I strangle them. It's a sort of mania that comes over me——"

"I don't believe you," Molly said. She treated Muldoon to her most dazzling smile. "I'm sure

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Muldoon knelt to help Molly pick up the contents of her handbag. Then he saw something he hadn't expected to find

Before the day of the sale a possible buyer at Sotheby's inspects items on offer. Dealers keep a constant watch for forged paintings

Sale room tastes change. A painting by Zucarelli would have yielded £50 a few years ago. Today it could fetch £1,000

Art's big money boom

by REX GRIZELL

Fine art is big business at today's auctions. Fortunes can be made with good taste—and a little luck

IN Sotheby's rooms in Bond Street, the auctioneer, James Kiddell, started off one lot at £300 at a recent sale of works of art. Gradually he worked the bidding up to £600, a hundred more than he had expected the lot to fetch. He was about to knock it down to the dealer who had bid first when a bored voice said: "Oh, come, one thousand pounds."

There was a rustle as heads turned in the crowded hall; Kiddell looked up. He recognized the impassive countenance of a well-known Greek shipping magnate.

"Eleven hundred pounds," said the dealer.

"Two thousand," in the same bored tone.

"Two thousand one hundred," said the dealer, unperturbed.

The lot was finally knocked down to the Greek for £3,500.

The next lot was carried in. Again Kiddell worked the bidding up to £500. Again the bored voice bid £1,000. At the dealer's bid of £2,000 Kiddell looked expectantly to the Greek, but all he saw was a slight satisfied smile.

"Bidding of this sort by fabulously wealthy men is one of several factors helping to sustain the postwar boom in fine art," says Kiddell, who has thirty years' experience of fine art dealing, and is one of the world's great experts on porcelain.

Since the war European and American industrialists, Greek shipping millionaires, coffee and mining millionaires from South America, Texas oil and cattle men, and Australian ranchers, have poured new money into the fine art market. Recently Charles B. Wrightsman, a Texas oil millionaire, paid more than £100,000 for Jan Vermeer's "Portrait of a Young Girl," a picture eighteen inches by sixteen inches. In 1816 this painting was sold in Rotterdam for three florins, equal to about 13s. 6d. today. Wrightsman also recently paid £17,000 for a single Louis XV table.

In 1951 Captain Macdonald Buchanan, the well-known British racing owner, bought Constable's "Young Waltonians" for £44,100 against international competition. In 1952, at the Galerie Charpentier in Paris, two of the world's most famous collectors, Madame Jean Walter, of France, and Swiss gunmaker Emil Burhle, bid against each other for a still life "Apples and Biscuits" by the French impressionist Cézanne. The picture went to Madame Walter for £33,000. When Cézanne held his first exhibition in 1895, his paintings cost about £30.

"Fine art is the world's hardest coin and there can be no better investment," says a London dealer. In the last fifty years no investment made on any of the world's stock exchanges can show a capital appreciation comparable to that of the best French impressionist paintings over the same period. In America 100 dollars invested in General Motors stock in 1909 would now be worth 115,000 dollars. In Britain £150 spent on Burmah Oil shares in 1903 would now be worth about £9,000. At about the same time a Renoir painting could have been bought for 100 dollars. Today it would fetch about 150,000 dollars.

Almost every branch of fine art has shown a continuous upward surge in prices since the war. Chippendale chairs which before the war cost £60 now cost £250. Fine silver has sometimes shown a one hundred per cent increase within a few months—a dozen forks sold at Sotheby's in October, 1954, for £50, realized £100 in November, 1955. In November, 1954, nine small porcelain figures by an eighteenth-century Italian, Bustelli, were sold for £35,647 in less than twenty minutes. Only five years before a similar figure was sold for £890, less than one-fifth of the 1954 average.

Modest collectors have enjoyed profits proportionately as large as those that have gone to the wealthy. Kiddell recently sold at Sotheby's for £1,550 a pottery charger bought by an English collector years ago for £17. A recent exhibition of Dutch and Flemish masters was almost entirely sold out. Most of the buyers were English collectors of modest means and included a schoolmaster, a works manager and company directors.

"In this boom many people have made a profit of several thousands in a few years since the war," says Kiddell.

There are other reasons for the boom besides the "new money." The chief one is the increasing scarcity of great works of art. As time goes by more and more collections are left to museums. "Museums don't die," says Jacques O'Hana, a London dealer. "In a museum a work has gone from the market for ever."

In America alone in the past thirty years more than three hundred new museums have opened. As well as receiving gifts, many of them enter the market with almost unlimited

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTHUR WHITTINGTON

buying resources. Shortage of great paintings has resulted in rocketing prices for "second eleven" works.

Works by Canaletto and Guardi, of the eighteenth-century Venetian school, were sold at Sotheby's last year for £10,500 and £9,000. Fifteen years ago they would not have bought one-twentieth as much. "A few years ago it was difficult to sell a painting by Zucarelli for fifty pounds; today they are fetching one thousand," says Kiddell.

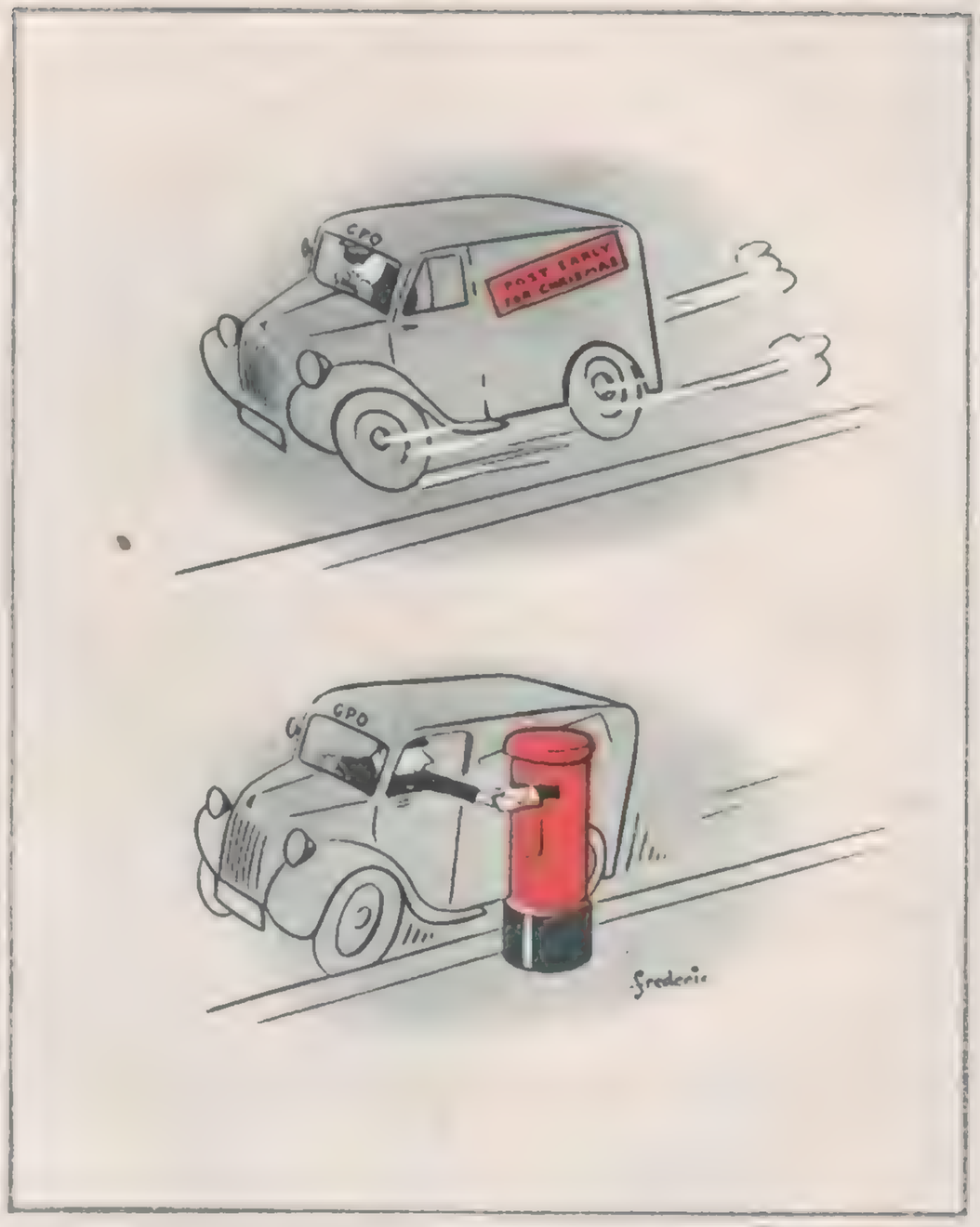
Changes of taste have also brought about sensational increases in value. Flower paintings, for many years difficult to sell, have recently become popular. In July, 1956, at Sotheby's, Lady Stott sold a flower painting by the Flemish painter Jan Brueghel for £7,500. She had inherited it from her father who bought it in 1880 for £31.

There are many reasons for collecting besides the love of art. Many people buy as a hedge against inflation, or to reduce death duties. Works of art retained in a family are free of death duties, as are those sold to national collections. Profits made by private collectors from the sale of works of art are not liable to tax.

London is still the world's capital of fine art. In 1955 London galleries and salerooms accounted for nearly half the £25 million fine art sales in the three major centres, London, Paris and New York. Two London firms, Sotheby's and Christie's, accounted between them for more than £4 million.

Dealers are making money even more rapidly and steadily than collectors. Some London galleries report that their American sales alone in 1955 were double those of 1954. Marlborough Fine Art, of Bond Street, which was opened six years ago, is now a neon-lighted, air-conditioned gallery de luxe. Last year this firm brought off one of the year's shrewdest deals. A client entrusted to them the sale of a sketch by the Spanish artist, El Greco, which his grandfather had bought years ago for £150. The firm applied for an export licence, but the National Gallery advised the government that the work should be retained in this country. The licence was refused. The National Gallery offered to buy the sketch for £25,000 and to pay the dealer's ten per cent commission. The offer was refused, and an export licence was again applied for. Eventually the National Gallery had to pay £40,600.

Though very little has fallen heavily since the war, the history of art sales shows some great declines in value, says Kiddell. A picture by Landseer, the Victorian painter, was sold in 1870



for £1,500, again in 1910 for £310, and today might fetch about £70. Thirty years ago works by Sargent were selling for £5,000. In the past two years none has sold for more than £100.

There are other risks in fine art buying. Last year there was a serious attempt to bring large numbers of forgeries of successful modern artists such as Matisse and Picasso into this country. Working in conjunction with the Paris police, who have a special section to deal with art forgeries, the Modern Art Dealers' Association foiled the attempt. But in spite of the efforts of the reputable dealers there are always a number of forgeries on the market.

Though there are risks in the market, there are also occasional windfalls. In 1952 the Director of the Museums of France said: "Britain still contains the greatest mass of works of art in private hands."

They are sometimes held by people who know nothing of their worth. In 1947 a retired British naval captain recognized a painting in a house in Westmorland as "The Musicians," a work by the seventeenth-century Italian, Caravaggio. He bought it for £100, had it cleaned, and sold it to the Metropolitan Museum of New York for £20,000.

In 1954 Peter Clement, a London business man, bought a picture in a London street market for 2s. 6d. It was by Francesco Guardi. Sotheby's sold it for £700.

"Collecting is more widespread than ever before," says Kiddell. "The time has gone when the rule was large and varied collections in comparatively few great houses." Last year 100,000 people sold things through Sotheby's and Christie's alone.

According to Kiddell, people looking to the future might do well to buy English seventeenth- and eighteenth-century glass, English portrait miniatures of the same period painted on ivory or enamel, eighteenth-century French and English fans, and paintings of the pre-impressionist French Barbizon school. Chinese blue and white porcelain has been out of favour since the 1920s, and is likely to come back into fashion, particularly since no porcelain has been allowed to leave China since 1939.

All the experts are agreed on the rules for buying. First, buy at the top of the class, however low the class. Next, buy a thing because you like it. If you find a work attractive, the chances are that other people will. If you are buying for investment, don't buy things whose chief distinction lies in historical or other associations. Don't buy things which are the height of fashion; the chances are it may not last.

Backed by sound judgment a modest outlay over the years can show a handsome profit. Between 1924 and 1939 Rees Jeffries, a Sussex business man, spent £5,000 on pictures. He backed his taste and bought the works of Matisse, Picasso, Bonnard, Braque, long before they achieved fame. In 1928 he paid £280 for a portrait of the painter Derain by Matisse. When his collection was sold in 1954 this picture was bought by the Tate Gallery for 6,700 guineas.

Perhaps the safest thing for the average man is to buy paintings that he likes by contemporary artists. They will only cost a few pounds, and at worst he will have something on his walls he likes. At best he may choose an artist destined to become one of tomorrow's masters. In 1948 the young French painter, Bernard Buffet, was selling his pictures for £4 from his studio to anyone who wanted them. Today they sell for £1,000.

Buyers should be suspicious of the works of the masters offered at bargain prices. In Venice before the war an American dealer bought cheaply a reputedly valuable picture. In order to get it out of Italy without paying high duties he had an inferior modern picture painted over the old one. When the cleaner in America had finished removing the surface painting, he noticed traces of work beneath the "old" painting. He carried on and revealed a portrait of Mussolini. THE END

That special magic

Continued from page 30

you're really the kindest man. The boys would love you. You *will* drive us down, won't you?"

"No," said Muldoon weakly. . . .

Thirty miles outside London, on Christmas Eve, the shooting-brake's rear offside tyre punctured. It took Muldoon twenty minutes to change the wheel. Snow was falling gently and he was hampered by Molly's gambolling cubs. Three gritty snowballs, scraped from the road, hit him in the neck while he was struggling with the wheel-brace.

He returned to the driving-seat with a good-humoured grin, for Molly's benefit, and managed to kick the nearest cub on the ankle.

Shortly after starting off again, Molly directed him into a side road. A series of winding lanes followed, with the countryside growing bleaker and more desolate every minute. It was almost dusk when they finally arrived at the wrought-iron gates of Harwood.

Muldoon opened them and drove up a long gravel drive to the front door. In the last of the daylight he studied the house with distaste. It was a grey, turreted pile of pseudo-Gothic design. Ivy shrouded the walls and its long narrow windows looked like dark coffins. Somewhere in a nearby wood an owl hooted.

Molly opened the door with an enormous key. The hinges squealed. They went into a stone-flagged, cavernous hall.

Muldoon sniffed the musty air. "And which," he asked pleasantly, "is Dracula's room. . . ?"

He marched out and began unloading the brake. There was the luggage of eight cubs; there were three crates that he supposed contained food and there was a Christmas tree that had been strapped to the brake's roof. It made quite a pile in the hall.

Muldoon dropped the last case and brushed his hands.

Christmas Eve in London, he reminded himself; soft lights, champagne, gaiety—and Jeanette, recently a star of the Marigold floor show. . . .

Not that Jeanette, for all her blonde charms, could hold a candle to an unencumbered Molly Regan. But Molly was not unencumbered. She had eight small boys and an unheated mausoleum in the depths of the country. He was glad he had made it quite clear that his obligations would be discharged when he left Molly and her brood at the door of Harwood. . . .

They stood now in a disconsolate group by the door. He stumped towards them, trying not to notice how frail she looked. "Everything all right now, eh?" he said cheerily. "In that case I'll be getting on."

"Thank you for bringing us down," Molly said politely. "You're sure you won't stay a little while?"

"No—no," said Muldoon. "I must get straight off." He avoided her eyes. "I'll collect you on Thursday morning." He looked round at the bleak stone walls and repressed a shudder. "Well—merry Christmas!"

As he went down the steps Muldoon was miserably conscious of nine pairs of eyes staring accusingly at his back. He felt, in that moment, as though he were being drummed out of some élite regiment. . . .

"Mike!" he heard Molly call. "Just a moment!"

WITH his hand on the shooting-brake's door, Muldoon turned. Molly, fumbling in her bag, was hurrying after him. She held out a small, gaily wrapped package. "Your Christmas present," she said. "I almost forgot about it."

"A present? For me?" Muldoon was astonished. He looked into her forlorn blue eyes, embarrassed to think that he had not bought her anything. "Thank you, Molly—but ye shouldn't have wasted the money."

"It's from all of us." Molly gestured towards the watching cubs. "'Tis only a little thing—a cigarette case. But you mustn't unwrap it till morning, Mike."

"Indeed I will not," Muldoon said. He felt deeply touched. How long was it since anyone had remembered him at Christmas? "Are you *sure* you'll be all right here?" he asked recklessly.

"Oh, don't worry about us. We'll manage somehow." Molly smiled bravely. "I expect we can find some firewood somewhere. . . ."

"Well——" Muldoon wavered. "Maybe I'd better make sure. It won't matter if I'm a bit late back."

"No, please!" Molly protested. "Don't let us spoil your arrangements."

"Nonsense! I couldn't possibly leave you without a fire," Muldoon said firmly. And he tramped back into the house.

A descent to the cellars disclosed a small mountain of logs and a couple of tons of anthracite. But though he searched the house from top to bottom, Muldoon could find nothing suitable for kindling a fire. Nor could he find an axe.

"We must have a fire," Molly said worriedly when he went into the kitchen to report the position. She was airing blankets over an electric stove.

"Look in the gunroom—there used to be some swords and things in there. Oh, and will you find out where the water turns on? I want to get the boys washed."

An hour later, with the water turned on, with fires burning in three rooms, with blisters all over his palms, Muldoon wearily returned a blunt claymore to the gunroom. He had abandoned hope of seeing London until after Boxing Day.

Dusty, dishevelled and incredibly hungry, he staggered into the kitchen. Molly was alone. Muldoon sniffed the

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IN THE RED & GOLD WRAPPER

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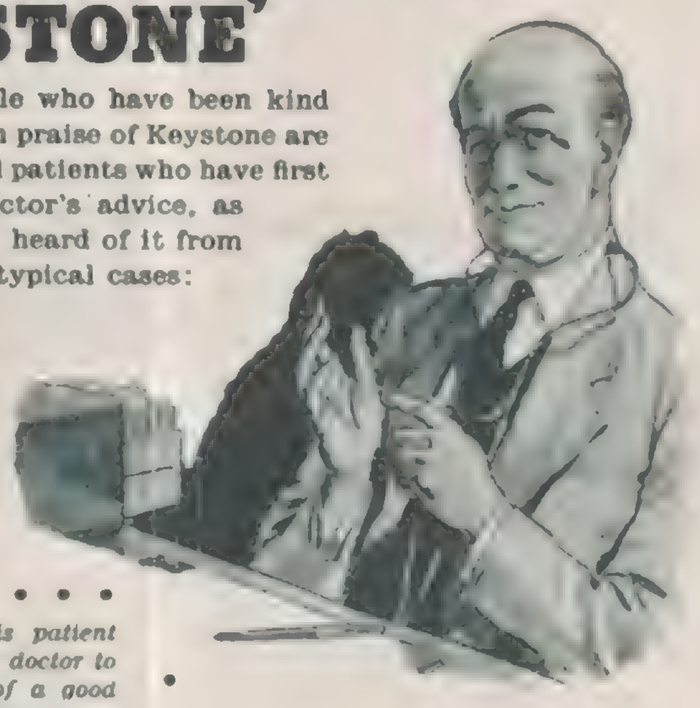

When this patient asked her doctor to tell her of a good restorative wine, he unhesitatingly answered, "Keystone Burgundy."

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air hopefully. "Supper?" he asked brightly.

"It is not," Molly said. "It's tomorrow's turkey that I'm part-roasting to save time in the morning. And those are puddings—so take your big hands off."

"But I'm ravenous," Muldoon protested. "Isn't there anything to eat now? Just a little wing, maybe?"

"There's a cheese sandwich on the table that's not too stale"—Molly bent and solicitously turned an oven dial two degrees—"and some tea left in the pot."

"A cheese sandwich!" Muldoon stared disgustedly. "Ah, they're a heartless lot, the Limerick people."

"When you've eaten," Molly said, "I want to get the Christmas tree up in the dining-room. Would you be a pet and fill a tub with earth?"

Be a pet! Muldoon choked on his sandwich. He noticed Molly was saying nothing now about spoiling his arrangements.

"And after that?" he said heavily. "What would I be doing next?"

"Well, then there are the decorations to be put up," Molly said, ticking off an invisible list on her fingers. "That'll take quite a time—you'll have to bring stepladders in from the barn. Then there are the vegetables to wash and a stone of potatoes to peel. And I've left most of the unpacking—and——"

"Enough, girl!" Muldoon put his hands over his ears. "I'm wearing to a shadow at the very thought."

"You're one that can afford to lose a bit of weight," Molly said unkindly. "Drink your tea down and let's get started."

MULDOON swore that it was going to be the worst Christmas Eve he'd ever spent. But Molly's enthusiasm and delight were infectious. Within ten minutes he was working willingly; and along towards midnight, in the sudden shock of finding he was enjoying himself, he almost fell from his ladder.

He fixed the last spray of holly in position and looked about him with a sense of achievement. Light and warm, gay with paper chains and coloured balloons, bright with tinsel, the house seemed altogether different.

Molly appeared with a tray. "Hot chocolate and biscuits, Mike."

"Bless you," Muldoon said gratefully. He descended the ladder. At some point in the evening Molly had found time to change her suit for a soft, blue dress. She looked about twice as pretty as was permissible to a mortal.

Her eyes sparkled as she gazed round. "It looks wonderful, Mike. Won't they be thrilled when they wake up?"

"What time d'ye think that will be?" Muldoon asked apprehensively. "About three hours from now?"

"I hope not—they're all asleep at the moment, anyway. I've just been up to see." She went across to the remaining crate and took out a bulging sack. "Do you feel ready to play Father Christmas?"

"Me?"

"Don't worry, I'll come with you and make sure you put the right parcels on the right beds. But I can't very well wear this——" Reaching into the crate again, she held up a red gown complete with ermine-trimmed hood and long white beard.

Muldoon gaped. "You take this Christmas business seriously, don't you?"

"Why not? When you remember what it stands for, it's still about the biggest date in the calendar." Molly looked at him gravely. "And no matter how much it's cheapened and commercialized, I think Christmas will always have a special magic because of that."

With a sense of shame Muldoon recalled his own cynical attitude. "I wasn't sneering, Molly," he said gently. "But—but if Christmas keeps its special magic, it's people like you who are the magicians. I suppose *you* bought all those toys?"

"Why, yes."

How many skipped lunches? How many bus fares walked? Muldoon wondered. Aloud, he said: "That's what I mean."

Molly blushed slightly. "I wish you'd stop yammering, Michael Muldoon, and come and put this on. I'm dying to see you in a beard."

"Okay, okay—but if the kids are asleep, what's the point?"

"They might wake up. I wouldn't want to destroy their illusions. Of course, I really bought it—will ye bend now, while I fasten this thing—I really bought it for you to wear at tea-time tomorrow. We'll have a lucky dip——"

Muldoon's head jerked up. "And how the devil did you know I'd be here then, instead of in London where I said I'd be after going straightaway?" he howled.

"Oh, Mike! Now look what you've done. The whiskers have come off."

"Drat and blast the whiskers!" said Muldoon, kicking them away. "I'm wanting to know how ye knew what wasn't even in my head at all. I told you yesterday——"

"Hush! There's no need to shout. I just had a feeling—a premonition, is it?—that you'd be staying after all." Molly grinned impishly. "Now wait while I get my bag. I'll need a safety-pin for that beard."

Muldoon stared after her dazedly, fighting against a growing suspicion. But she was a mere slip of a girl, he told himself. It was nonsense to think she could have *planned* all this. . . . It was also painful to his vanity.

Molly came back with her handbag. As she came through the door she stumbled over a fold in the carpet and the bag shot from her hand, its contents scattering across the floor.

Muldoon knelt to help her collect them. Two lipsticks, a powder compact, a diary, an ear-ring, a driving licence. . . .

A driving licence! He straightened slowly, flicking the pages. It went back several years.

"So you didn't even need a driver," he said, remembering the look he had surprised on her face just before she'd

HOME—1

It takes a heap of living in a house to make it home.

E. A. Guest

asked for free driving lessons. Had she decided then that Michael Fitzherbert Muldoon was the man to do the heavy work at her Christmas party?

"But you drove very nicely, Mike," Molly said, "and I never was good at changing wheels."

Her eyes were innocent. *Beautiful,* Muldoon thought bitterly—*as beautiful as an angel and as cunning as a wagon load of monkeys. What do you do with such a girl?*

If you have any sense at all, a small inner voice answered promptly, *you marry her as soon as maybe.*

Strangely, considering what she had done to him, Muldoon did not find that idea alarming. In fact, the more he thought about it the better it seemed.

Molly seemed disturbed by his long silence. "You're not angry with me, Mike, are you?" she asked. She picked up the beard and hung it over Muldoon's ear. Then she added: "You look awfully funny with your whiskers all lop-sided like that."

Muldoon stirred. He pointed to a spot just in front of him. "Come here," he said sternly.

Meekly, she obeyed.

"If I gave you what you deserve you'd be having the great-grandfather of a spanking," Muldoon said. "But as it's Christmas—peace on earth, goodwill to all men—and as you're standing under the mistletoe. . . ."

As he took her in his arms, Molly made a half-hearted protest. "Oh, Mike, your whiskers——"

"You got me into them," Muldoon said mercilessly. "Next year maybe you'll know better."

Molly giggled. And then she was silent. THE END

A place at table

Continued from page 17

Riding members had too much unconscious respect for the democratic process to let a meeting get really out of hand, and the strangers in their midst followed their example. They left the council chamber in small groups, talking hotly among themselves.

Outside, an unpleasant sleet was falling heavily and freezing on the pavement as it fell. The Trades Council group paused in the huge, echoing porch to turn up their coat collars, the employers to get out their car keys and offer lifts to some of the women.

"Excuse, please," said a voice at Cainge's ear.

Cainge started and looked round irritably at Edelmann.

"My bicycle," said Edelmann. He pointed. "There!"

Sure enough, behind a marble, frock-coated figure representing the first mayor of Annotsfield, was concealed a bicycle. It was a very old bicycle, much and unconventionally mended, and of a shape unfashionable in England for many years.

An old grid, thought Cainge with scorn.

Usually he thought nothing of the first mayor of Annotsfield—in his opinion one of those Victorian hypocrites who built a fortune by grinding the faces of their workers and then had the cheek to call themselves public benefactors because they gave the town a swimming bath. But now he felt positively affronted to see this wretched alien bike scratching the corporation's marble. He stepped back with a gesture conceding the right of way towards the bike to Edelmann, but his gesture was deliberately contemptuous and no smile brightened his angry little face.

Edelmann said: "Perhaps one day, Mr. Cainge, you come to see us in our rabbit place, yes?"

Cainge scowled. He moved out of the way of the bicycle's pedals with an insulting, exaggerated care.

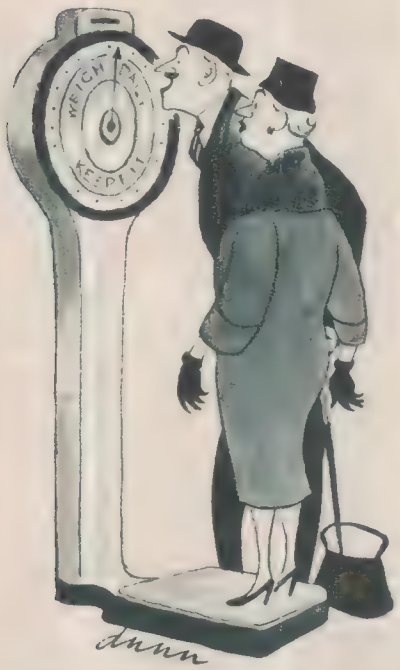
"Yes?" pressed Edelmann. "Walker Street, number twenty, is our address."

He was certainly a very tall, handsome fellow, thought Cainge with irritation; just the type to be a boss's pet. He towered above Cainge; his great eyes glowed, his fine nostrils were dilated, perhaps with anger. The long white scar down his cheek was, however, ugly, being curiously puckered.

"Nay—I don't see as it would serve any useful purpose," said Cainge in his most disagreeable tone.

"Yes—you come," said Edelmann, nodding. "You see."

He picked up the bicycle and carried



"No, you're not overweight, dear. It's just that you're fourteen inches too short"

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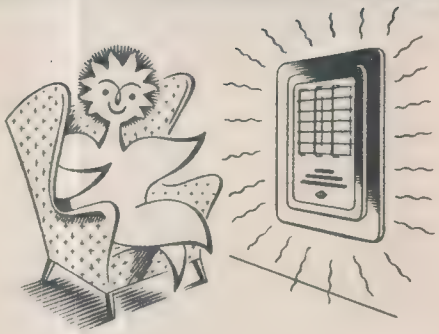

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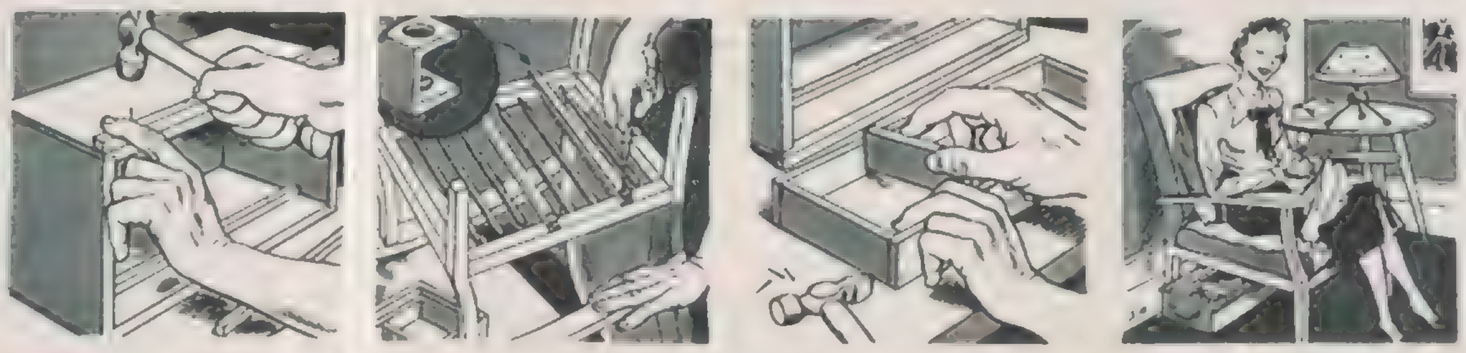

MY wife usually does her needlework by the fireside, so I made a sewing drawer to fit under her chair. I obtained an old drawer of suitable size, and pinned two strips of beading along its top outside edges. These strips slide into two pieces of aluminium channel which I screwed underneath the chair seat. I made a removable tray, divided into sections for silks, cottons, buttons and needles, which rests on two strips of wood pinned inside the drawer. Finally, I fitted an attractive handle, and stained the drawer to match the chair. —*Charles Wildish, Layer Road, Colchester.*

it lightly down the stairs. . . .

Amos Cainge was not a man with a great deal of home life. He had a very quiet, reserved, careworn-looking little wife who was still rather pretty, and three stepchildren, now grown up and out of the home, whom he had brought up with staunch, fierce devotion. He had no children of his own.

His main interest lay in politics: union, national and local. His life was lived in public meetings. Night after night he trudged out and caught a bus to some part of the West Riding, speaking here and there, fighting his own ward election to the town council or those of his colleagues, asking awkward questions at his opponents' meetings, bringing up points of order, haranguing, objecting, accusing; always fiery, always aggressive; indefatigable and full of hate. . . .

By making a slight detour from the direct route from the Annotsfield bus station to his terrace house, Cainge could pass down Walker Street. A few nights after the town hall meeting, from angry curiosity, he made this detour.

He found that number twenty was an old, tall, tumbledown, smoke-blackened place, wreckage of the industrial revolution. But it spilled light from every window, and resounded with laughter, music, singing. Bursting with moral indignation against these hated folk who threatened the workers standard of living and had the impudence to laugh while doing so, Cainge on a sudden impulse ran furiously up the old chipped steps and banged the door-knocker as hard as he could.

Instantly there was silence. Many of the lights went out—Cainge saw the yellow squares on the snowy pavement turn dark. Then there was a feeling of soft, quick movement within the house, a sort of scurrying, and then sounds of whispering behind the door. Cainge lifted the door-knocker again and beat a furious tattoo.

The door was flung open. Edelmann stood there, looking extremely tall and stern. "Come in, please," he said.

Cainge stepped forward and the light from the single electric bulb in the hall fell on his angry face.

"Oh!" cried Edelmann in a great gust of relief, his face breaking into smiles. "It is you, Mr. Cainge. Mr. *Councillor* Cainge! Excuse, please. . . . It is Councillor Cainge," he called up the staircase. "It is not police."

Voices and laughter broke out at once upstairs and several lights went on.

"You come to see?" said Edelmann, turning to Cainge again. "Good!" He seized Cainge's hand between his own and wrung it heartily. "Excuse please that I appeared not glad to see you. We not like knocks on door at night—we fear it is police. But it is Councillor Cainge only. No secret police here! You have supper? Yes!"

He shepherded Cainge into a small room, thickly hung with highly coloured Christmas decorations which appeared tinselly, gaudy, altogether foreign and disreputable to Cainge's resentful eyes. A dark-haired woman, rather handsome in a foreign way, sat with a book on her lap as if she had been reading to the boy of twelve or so who leaned against her chair. "My wife, Maria," Edelmann said. "My younger son, John. Supper for Councillor Cainge, Maria. Excuse please—I make good fire."

The embarrassed Cainge found himself sitting at a small, rickety, baize-covered table in front of a huge, blazing fire. Edelmann threw coal on this fire with a recklessness which appalled Cainge, who knew the price of coal and its relation to Edelmann's wages very well.

He protested about the fire, he declined supper. But what was he to do

HOME—2

Home is the girl's prison and the woman's workhouse.

Bernard Shaw

when dish after dish appeared on the table before him? In his own eyes Cainge was a just man, and he was abashed by the knowledge that his knock had frightened these people, that they had believed him to belong to some awful Gestapo—or whatever was their latest name.

He, Amos Cainge, a member of a secret police! He owed them some apology, he felt, and this was peculiarly irritating when he disliked their presence in his town so much.

The most elaborate and odd-looking foods were placed before him, of which he did not even know the names: slices of large sausage patterned like the marble of the town hall porch, salads with strange ingredients, potatoes curiously dressed. There was so much of this food that Cainge felt he was eating the Edelmanns' provisions for the whole of next week.

And what made it worse was that other dwellers in the house came in with dishes of food in their hands and laid them before Cainge, smiling and gesticulating and uttering incomprehensible words.

All the same he hardened his heart. These people, interlopers, industrial traitors, were the enemies of his class. A little supper and soft soap would not change Amos Cainge's views.

The room was by now quite crowded, and the talk and gesticulation round the walls had become highly animated when suddenly there came a slight crash, and then a pause. Cainge looked round to see what had fallen. It was, in fact, Edelmann's comical old bicycle, which had been leaning against the wall in a corner, and which now lay with its handlebars turned up at an angle, on the floor.

Cainge prepared to receive the bicycle's fall with the acid smile he kept for feeble jokes, when he observed with surprise a look of consternation on every face. All the Estonians stood back from the bicycle and gazed at it in silence, except the young man who had knocked it down, who poured out a great rush of words to Edelmann which even Cainge could see were meant to be a heartfelt apology. Edelmann put his hand comfortingly on the young man's shoulder, but his face was grave.

Nobody seemed to dare to touch the bicycle except Edelmann himself, who stooped down and, handling the old frame with as much tenderness as if it were a baby, gently restored it to an upright position and tested its pedals and chain. Cainge noticed that in spite of its antiquity the bicycle's metalwork gleamed; somebody clearly gave it very regular polishings.

Exclamations of relief showed him that the bicycle was unharmed, but the accident had sobered Edelmann's compatriots, and they all now bowed to Cainge and Edelmann and left the room. Mrs. Edelmann took the dishes away and her little son went with her, and Cainge stood up and prepared to take his leave.

"Excuse, please, this *fuss* about my bicycle," said Edelmann, smiling and pronouncing the very English word "fuss" with relishing pride. "But you see, this bicycle save my life. Therefore I love it greatly, you see."

"Saved your life?" said Cainge on a rather sarcastic and unbelieving note.

"Yes," said Edelmann, nodding. "And gave me liberty, too, you see."

"Liberty?" said Cainge, unable to be quite uninterested in this word.

"Excuse, please," said Edelmann, drawing up a chair and gently urging Cainge towards it. "You sit down, please, I tell you. . . ."

It was hard work listening to the story, for Edelmann's English became more excited and less comprehensible as he went on. But after a while Cainge forgot the irritation of this difficulty, and simply strained to hear what Edelmann told: the seizing of Edelmann's country by the great foreign power; the persecution, the spyings, the executions.

"My older son is killed. . . ."

Maria and the young boy got away into Germany, but Edelmann left it too late and could not follow them. But he always intended to escape if he could, and accordingly he rode about on his bicycle every day, so that the Russians were accustomed to seeing him. Then at last one day he drew near to the frontier. Suddenly, he put on a terrific spurt. His feet on the pedals drove hard and fast.

The bicycle did not fail him, but flew ahead. The frontier guards fired on him. (Here Edelmann imitated the hollow whine and final *tock* of the bullets in a most realistic and terrifying way.) One bullet touched his cheek. It was bad when the bullet seared his cheek because he was startled and his hands slightly jumped on the bars, and for a moment the bicycle—as it were—Edelmann showed the action with swaying hands——

"Wobbled," supplied Cainge.

"Wobbled," agreed Edelmann, nodding. "Wobbled and almost fall. If I fall—" he pursed his lips and shrugged his shoulders "—I not now talk to you, Councillor Cainge, you see."

But the bicycle regained its equilibrium and Edelmann drove it fiercely on and at last got safely through. Then for many long months he languished in one prison, while Maria and the boy languished in another.

"But you managed to keep the bicycle?" queried Cainge.

"Yes. They laugh, you see."

FOR long months he and his wife did not know whether the other was alive or not. It was very bad. But at last they were reunited and got to England. To England! To freedom! Full of hope, of energy, of fresh courage, of loving gratitude!

"We are grateful, you see," Edelmann ended simply. "We wish to work for England. So we are hurt, we are grieved, we are greatly disappointed, you see, when you do not want us, Councillor Cainge."

"I see," said Cainge.

He paused. He hesitated. He swallowed. He stretched across and with his hand touched Edelmann's knee. Then, in a very quiet, sober tone, quite unlike his usual grating aggression, he began to tell Edelmann a tale he had not mentioned for many long years, namely that in that terrible black year of unemployment, 1931, his great friend, Jack Taylor, had gassed himself. Yes, put his head in the gas oven, after eleven months out of work, when his wife Ethel told him there was another baby coming. He'd borrowed a shilling for the gas meter from his friend Cainge, who happened to have managed to keep his job, and gassed himself.

Cainge married the widowed Ethel and brought up Jack's three children, but all the same, Jack had gassed himself from despair, what with the unemployment and the Means Test and the new baby coming; he had gassed himself with a shilling borrowed from his friend.

"There were too many men for the jobs in the textile trade in 1931," said Cainge. "And now, just because they've full order books, like, they want to bring you folks in, which'll make a surplus of workers bigger than ever, next time trade slackens a bit. So it's difficult like for me to welcome you folks."

"Perhaps you are not quite just to us?" said Edelmann mildly.

"Happen not. But I can't ever forget how Jack looked, you see."

"I see," said Edelmann, nodding.

"I reckon we both see," said Cainge.

"Yes. We both see. What we both do, then?"

"I reckon there'll have to be a bit of give and take," said Cainge. . . .

"Dear Mr. Mayor," wrote Cainge in his fierce, spiky writing: "My council have agreed that they should be represented on the new committee concerned with the welfare of the European Voluntary Workers, and I shall be happy to represent them thereon. Yours faithfully, A. Cainge." THE END

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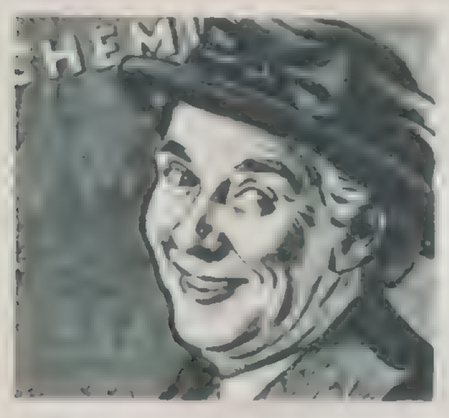

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HEMOTABS

Angel's ransom

Continued from page 21

the radar picked it up again, smaller and dimmer, on a five-mile ranging. Its course was steadily seawards.

Neyrolle murmured politely formal thanks and stood up to leave without further comment. It was too much for George. He said unbelievingly: "Are you letting her go? Just like that?"

"I am doing what I think best." Neyrolle was holding himself under tight restraint. "Nothing has happened to frighten her. Nothing *shall* happen to frighten her."

He went on: "We know from her behaviour that she expects a signal on the hour. It will be daylight in a little while, so she leaves, but she will return again for a signal on the hour. The next time she comes within the capes, the net will be ready behind her. I dare not move without it."

"How do you know that she'll ever come back?" George demanded furiously. "How do you know that Herriot isn't cutting their throats right now, getting rid of the evidence because he knows the rendezvous has failed? How do you know *anything*?"

Neyrolle said: "I know that a man who plans as carefully as Herriot does not pin his faith on a rendezvous that must succeed or fail within the space of three hours. Thirty-five million francs will bring him back. . . ."

SCUD and clouds had hidden the land by daybreak. The sea was moderating as the force of the wind diminished, and the rain had stopped. Blake was steering seawards on the course Jules had given him at four o'clock.

It was twenty-four hours since he had slept, and then only briefly. The tensions of the night had kept him keyed up until Herriot reluctantly abandoned the attempt to raise Roche's signal through the storm.

Defeat, even temporary, made Herriot vicious. There was no reason why the prisoners could not have been released from their cabins while the cruiser was out of sight of land, but he chose to leave them locked in. He was reluctant even to give Blake a relief from the long wheel watch.

"I must relieve him while he attends to the engines," Jules had told Herriot, stubbornly. Herriot had yielded only after a long argument, and Jules's face was dark with resentment when he came to take the wheel.

"How ugly can a man be?" he growled. "Because the weather is against him, everybody is his enemy. Make your inspection, Captain, and stay clear of the little snake. He is in a mind to kill this morning."

Blake ignored the warning. Mechanically performing his duties in the engine-room, he racked his dull brain for excuses that would allow him to approach Herriot during the quarter of an hour of freedom. He had only one desperate idea now—to grab Herriot's gun or die in the attempt.

It seemed almost like a promise of success when Herriot came to the top of the engine-room ladder to call bleakly: "Come up. I want you in the saloon."

But the promise of success was not fulfilled. On deck Herriot stayed well behind Blake, pistol ready, and shepherded him into the saloon without once standing within the distance that could be covered in a single jump. The radio was going.

"What does that mean?" Herriot said. He indicated the barograph with a movement of his head. The heavy descending line traced by the machine's stylus before and during the storm had levelled off and was turning sharply upwards.

"The storm is over," Blake said, measuring his distance, waiting his opportunity.

"The radio said it is going to blow harder than ever."

"Not with a rising barometer."

"Don't toss words at me." Herriot seemed to shrink behind the levelled gun. "Why do your instruments say one thing and the weather report another?"

A good ten feet separated them, the distance Bruno di Lucca had failed to

"We'd been married ten years or so before I discovered he was bald"

close before he died with three bullets in his body.

"The barograph must have broken down," Blake said carefully. "There's a barometer in the wheelhouse."

"We'll take a look at it," Herriot jerked his head at the doorway. "Go ahead of me." He did not move until Blake himself moved.

Herriot's watchfulness kept Blake from hoping for an opportunity on the way to the wheelhouse. Herriot did not speak again until he had studied the barometer over the chart table. It registered the beginning of a new drop.

"So you're a sailor!" he snarled at the startled Jules. "You blockhead! You don't know enough to keep that clockwork thing below going. Tonight will be worse than last night. We haven't a chance of getting in."

"The storm is breaking," Jules protested. "Look, the wind is down——"

"And the weather report says a new storm will blow up before nightfall." Herriot's voice was thick with rage. "You stupid slab of Provençal beef! You belong behind a plough with your feet in dung."

Jules flushed an angry red. "If it

HOME—3

Home is heaven for beginners.

Charles Parkhurst

blows up, it will blow out again," he said sullenly. "We've got time."

"With that sparrow-gutted Roche sitting on thirty-five million francs?" screamed Herriot. "How long do you expect his nerve to last? Another night to tremble over what will happen to him if I do not come to his rescue, and he will bolt. Go back."

"You're mad."

"I said go back."

In his incredulity Jules half turned from the wheel, far enough to see the automatic that now threatened him instead of Blake. With a shrug he put the wheel over, bringing the Angel about in a wide sweep that sent her heading into the boil of her own wake.

"It will do us no good to return now," he said sullenly. "Roche won't be expecting us during the day. Unless he happens to look towards the sea."

"We will make him look towards the sea." Herriot's fury had disappeared with the change of course. In its place was a driving eagerness, a fierce concentration of will that won even from Blake a reluctant appreciation of the little man's audacity. "We will make all of Monaco look towards the sea! The world thinks that Farr has fled that Belgian baroness's writ of attachment on his yacht. What is more in keeping with his character than that the Angel should return to lie tantalizingly beyond reach of process servers while a boat goes ashore? Freddy Farr thumbs his nose at authority again."

"I don't like it," Jules grumbled. "Too many questions can be asked."

"Questions!" Herriot laughed. It was not his usual fox-bark but an exultant crow of confidence. "If anyone comes out to us to ask questions"—the pistol again swung toward Blake—"they will be turned aside by the man who holds the lives of his passengers in even greater value than his own." Herriot's grin was ominous. "Will they not, Captain. . . ?"

George Samson came instantly awake when the telephone rang at his bedside. He was alert when he took up the receiver, but he found it hard to believe that he understood the sense of Neyrolle's first words.

"The Angel's back," Neyrolle said. "She's standing off outside the harbour."

"She *can't* be—what time is it?"

"Ten o'clock in the morning. I'd hoped for something like this. How soon can you be at the port?"

"In twenty minutes. Fifteen. Do we use the pilot boat?"

"Yes. You will have your wish to be among the first to board her. But do not waste any time. . . ."

The rain had stopped. Under still lowering clouds the Angel lay half a mile off the bluff of Monte Carlo.

"What do you suppose brought her back so soon?" George asked Neyrolle.

"Audacity." Neyrolle watched the yacht through his binoculars. "We will meet it with equal audacity." To Corsi he said: "The French understand their parts?"

Corsi said: "Their craft are to remain out of sight behind the capes until our pilot boat leaves the port. Then they will stand by to block an escape if the need arises. Otherwise they will not participate."

"Good," Neyrolle said. "I have the same feeling for Monsieur Herriot as Monsieur Samson has for his story. I want him all to myself. . . ."

The boat they were to use was tied up in the lee of the patrol boat manned by the Brigade Maritime. An *agent* held it steady while the three men stepped in and settled themselves. Another *agent* handed Corsi a *mitraillette*, a light machine-pistol mounted with a framework shoulder-stock.

Neyrolle turned to George. "When the time comes you must identify the people on board as quickly as you can."

"Everyone ready?" Corsi asked. Sitting at the steering lever of the outboard motor, he sounded almost casual.

Neyrolle nodded. Corsi pulled strongly at the starting cord. The motor popped, fired, and settled down to its steady, metallic clatter. One of

Continued on page 42

Just how unreasonable Can he be?

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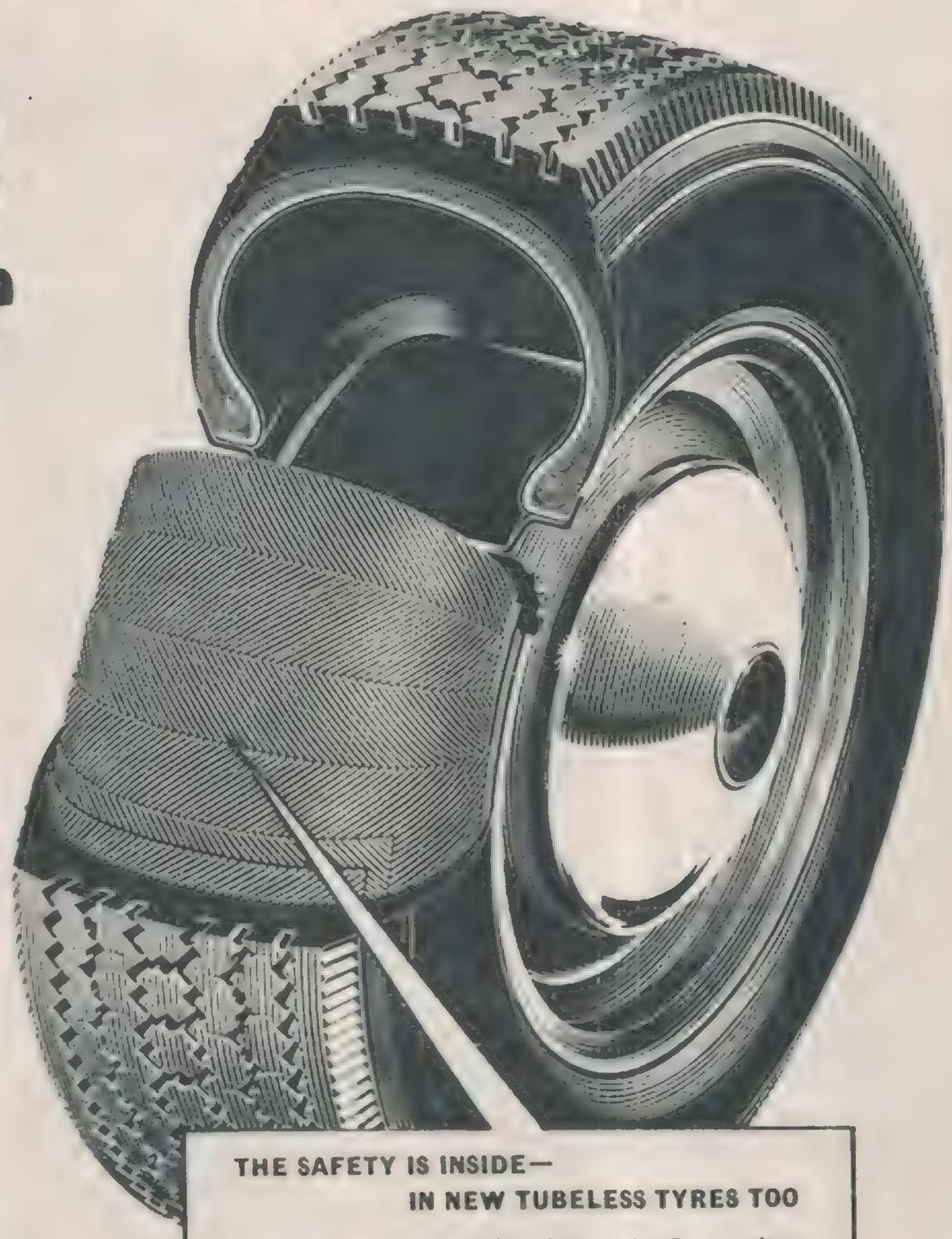

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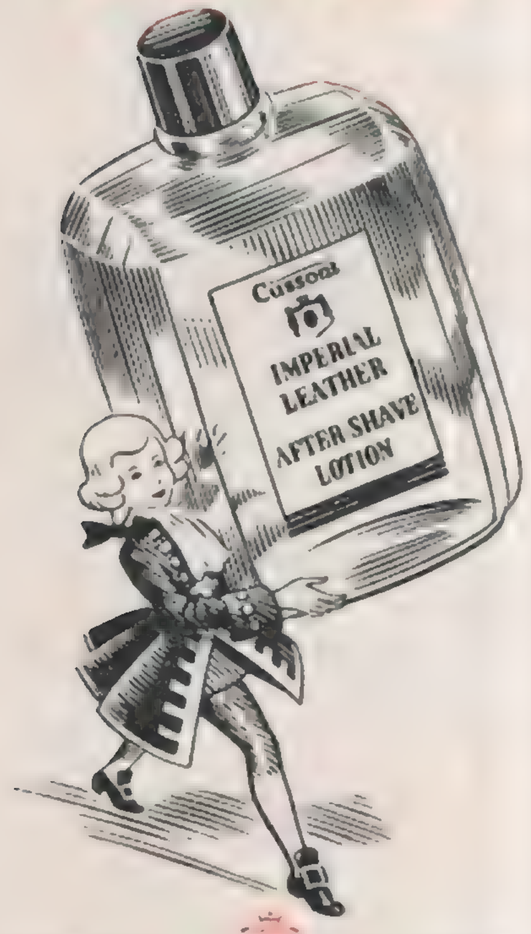

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the men watching from the patrol boat's rail raised his hand in silent salute as the pilot boat puttered away from the jetty. . . .

In the wheelhouse of the Angel Herriot was the first to spot the approaching boat. "What is that boat doing?" he asked sharply.

Blake looked where Herriot was pointing. The little boat was moving unmistakably in their direction.

The realization that it might be the diversion he wanted sharpened his wits. He said indifferently: "Pilot boat. She's coming out to offer us a helmsman."

Herriot scowled mistrustfully for a moment, then called Jules in from the bridge to take a look.

"It's the *pilotage* all right," Jules agreed. "They think we're waiting to be taken in. It's normal enough in this kind of sea. I'll wave her off as soon as—wait a minute!"

His binoculars had shown him something. "One of them isn't *pilotage*," Jules announced. "I've seen him before. He came down to the port in a *fiacre* with the millionaire and the others the day we sailed."

Herriot swore. He came close enough to Blake to jab the pistol into his middle. "Who is it?" he snapped. "Talk quickly. Who was in the *fiacre*?"

"A newspaper reporter," Blake said shortly.

"What has he to do with Farr?"

"He's writing an article about him."

"I don't like it," Jules said. "Let's get out of here."

"Be quiet. Let me think," Herriot told him curtly.

By now the pilot boat was half-way out from the port, dipping and soaring on the long swells. Blake could see the angry indecision in Herriot's face. With the pistol pressing into his middle, he thought: *Step aside, hit out and grab. There's a chance—just a slim chance.*

His stomach muscles gathered into a cold ache of dread and anticipation. But he was not to know how far his courage might have carried him, for Herriot reached a decision first. He stepped back, snapped: "Watch him," to Jules and hurried from the wheelhouse.

Blake needed no watching. The let-down after the peak to which he had nearly keyed himself left him sweating and weak. His knees were still treacherous when Herriot returned wearing a white mess jacket belonging to César, the Angel's steward.

Herriot was indecisive no longer. He said: "I have a feeling that you might accept martyrdom if an opportunity arose, Captain. Therefore, we are about to bring Farr on deck to deal with the situation. He, not you, will suffer from any mistakes of judgment made by either of you. Walk ahead of me."

He marched Blake back to the saloon and tossed the key to Freddy's cabin down on the stretch of carpet between them. "Bring him up," he said abruptly. "Remind him and the others that he dies if they create a disturbance. And don't waste time."

Blake tasted the gall of humiliation as he bent to pick up the key. Herriot knew too well the power of terror. He turned away from the levelled pistol, ashamed by his fear.

And in that instant, with the key to Freddy's release in his palm, he saw the means to attack Herriot where he had no defence, the single counter-weapon against which terror and the promise of death were powerless.

When he went below he did not know exactly how he was going to use the weapon. But he was thinking clearly again.

He went first to Freddy's cabin. The door was barricaded. Behind it Freddy's unsteady voice said: "Jim?"

"Yes. Open up. Hurry!"

When the door opened, Blake outlined the situation quickly in a voice that would not carry up the companionway.

"We've got to do exactly what we're told," he said. "Explain to Valentina and Marian that unless they stay away from their portholes and keep quiet, you'll get it. Let Herriot hear you. He's at the head of the companionway, and he'll be listening. Sound scared."

"I *am* scared." Freddy was ghastly pale. "What are you up to? Are we going to get out of this?"

"We've got a chance," Blake said. "That's all I can say."

He left Freddy and went to Laura di Lucca's cabin. The key to her door, Herriot's small miscalculation, was still in his pocket. He used it, stepped inside the cabin, and closed the door softly behind him.

Laura di Lucca lay supine. Her eyes opened when he came in. She did not turn her head, but continued to stare blankly upwards. Blake could hear Freddy talking urgently in the passage-way and, through the porthole, the swelling putter of the approaching boat.

He said: "Will you listen to me?"

Laura gave no sign that she had heard. He went to the bed and bent over her, his eyes on her unfocused eyes while he spoke, slowly and simply.

When he left the cabin, he did not know whether his words had penetrated behind that blind stare, he could only hope. . . .

In the pilot boat, George said tensely: "That's Freddy with the bandaged hand. The man in ducks is Blake. Don't know who is wearing the steward's jacket. Herriot?"

"He's the right size," Neyrolle agreed.

"He's got a gun in Farr's back," Corsi said matter-of-factly. "Look at the way they're standing."

The three men had come out on to the Angel's deck while the pilot boat was still a hundred yards off. Blake and Freddy stood at the rail, Herriot inconspicuously in the rear.

"We'll be waved off in a minute," Neyrolle said. "Pretend not to notice. We must get in closer."

"There's another man watching us from the wheelhouse," George said. "I can't make out his face, but he's big. Must be the Provençal."

"Leave him to me," Corsi said. "I'll stop anything he starts. It's the little one in the white coat who'll give us trouble. He's going to be hard to get at behind all that protection."

"Closer!" Neyrolle said fiercely.

On board the Angel, Herriot said: "All right, Captain. Wave them off. Appear friendly. Just tell them we're not going into port."

Blake made a megaphone of his hands. In the boat, Neyrolle cupped his hand questioningly to his ear at the shout. Blake shouted again. The boat continued to putter on.

At fifty yards, Herriot said tightly: "An excuse won't save Farr if you let them come any closer. You've got to stop them somehow."

Freddy made an agonized sound in his throat. He was pressed up tight against the rail by the barrel of the pistol boring into his back. Blake waved his arms in a signal to the other boat to sheer off.

Neyrolle said: "Throttle down and drift in towards her stern." To George he added: "I'm going to try to take the white coat from the flank, but we must look natural. Keep talking."

The sharp popping of the outboard died to a mutter. Shouting was unnecessary after the racket of the motor died. George was surprised by the easy naturalness of his own voice when he called: "Ahoy, Angel! May I come aboard with the pilot?"

"We aren't taking a pilot," Blake called back. "We're not going in."

"May I come aboard? I have to talk to you, Freddy."

The pistol nudged Freddy's backbone. He swallowed hard before he could obey its silent command. With an effort, he managed to say: "What do you want?"

"I finished the article. I need your okay before I send it off."

"No objections."

"Sorry, that's not enough," George called back. The swell and Corsi's handling were carrying the pilot boat inconspicuously towards the Angel's stern. "You'll have to read it over. I'll need your signature to it before I can get an editor to take it."

"Mail me a copy," Freddy said hoarsely.

"What's the matter? Are you still afraid of a writ?"

"Yes."

"I'm not going to serve it on you, if that's what you're worried about. Let me come aboard."

"No!"

"Keep talking," Neyrolle muttered.

"I'd like a story about this trip of yours, too," George said. "Why did you leave your crew behind?"

"None of your business."

Herriot's impatient whisper said: "Tell him you'll see him ashore tomorrow. Get rid of him."

"I'll see you——" Freddy began. He swallowed hard and went dumb, unable to finish. His eyes were agonized. The automatic jabbed into his back.

"Go on," Herriot whispered.

In the pilot boat, Neyrolle was suffering his own kind of agony. The drift of the boat had only served to screen the white coat behind Blake's body instead of Freddy's, and to drop any farther astern would deprive Corsi of his domination over the man in the wheelhouse. Freddy was still tongue-tied; Corsi was looking anxiously at his chief for instructions; George, desperate for words, could think of nothing further to say.

Blake was silently crying. *Let it happen now, if it's going to happen. Let it come!* when Laura di Lucca appeared, wraith-like, in the doorway of the saloon almost at Herriot's elbow. She stood there for some seconds, blinking at the unfamiliarity of the daylight, before she spoke in a flat, dead voice that carried clearly to the man in the pilot boat.

"This man murdered my husband," Laura di Lucca said. "Please inform——"

Keyed up and waiting for the moment though he was, Blake was not as quick as Herriot. The gunman whirled and fired point-blank while Blake was still spinning away from the rail. The impact of the bullet drove Laura di Lucca back through the doorway as Herriot whirled again to meet Blake's attack. Blake's hand met his wrist and snapped the arm up and aside. The shot went harmlessly into the air.

"That ends it," Blake said. "You're beaten. Drop the gun."

"Jules!" Herriot screamed. He kicked and struggled in the grip that Blake had on his wrist and body. "Jules!"

His answer was a sudden throb of power in the Angel's hull as her motors roared into life, followed immediately by a crackling burst of rapid fire from the *mitraillette* that Corsi had whipped from its concealment.

The Angel heeled over slowly, gathering speed, driving not away from shore but towards it. Her circling

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To lovers who have been long apart,
To the homeless and hopeless of all the earth,
To the old who hold out their arms to death.
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For the mother awaiting the hour of birth,
The father who would dandle
Love on his lap in the firelight;
And alike for saint and child
To whom every candle is a miracle.

"If it wasn't for all this snow, I think I could do it"

movement took her almost into collision with the pilot boat, so that as they passed it, with Blake and Herriot still locked together in the embrace that held Herriot helpless and harmless, they looked down from a distance of a few feet at George Samson and the intent upturned face of Corsi above the ready *mitraillette*.

Neyrolle, holding a drawn pistol, shouted to Blake: "Drop the scum overboard, Captain. We'll take care of him."

FACES slid by. Still gaining speed, the Angel yawed and yawed again. It told Blake that she was a runaway, that her wheel was unmanned. With both motors wide open, she was heading for the rocks.

Herriot still fought, strong for his size but not strong enough to free himself.

Blake felt no triumph, only a kind of anger that the gunman refused to recognize defeat.

"You're beaten," Blake said again. The anger swelled and burst in his throat. "Everybody tricked you, little man. I did, and Laura di Lucca, and those men in the boat."

He released the grip with which he had pinioned Herriot's body and, taking him by the back of the neck, forced his head round towards Freddy, who was standing weak and shaken at the rail.

"He tricked you, too," Blake said. "From the beginning. He gave you a cheque that sold you to the police. Think about that where you're going."

The Angel yawed again, calling him. Even in victory, Blake could not escape her demands. By wrist and neck he picked Herriot up bodily, swung him over the rail, and let go.

The smaller boat was altering its course towards the man in the water as Blake ran for the wheel. A string of evenly spaced holes in the wheelhouse windows, blood from a bullet wound in the head of the body crumpled on the deck matting, were the end of Jules.

Blake pushed the body out of the way and took the wheel, seeing for the first time the patrol boat that bore down from the direction of the harbour; seeing also, as the Angel came about, the other boats standing away from the capes to cut off flight towards the sea.

Herriot had been well trapped at the end. Blake did not realize that the little murderer had even yet made his escape until the Angel lay alongside the still body rocking on the blood-stained swells, and Freddy was saying foolishly: "He shot himself, Jim. He lifted the gun out of the water and just shoved it in his mouth. It was horrible. . . ."

A moon rose, and the Mediterranean once more lay silvery and placid in the night. The twin beacons at the harbour mouth threw bright reflections of red and green on the still water behind the jetty where the Angel was moored.

Neyrolle said: "There's a question I have not asked until now. You need not answer it, if you would rather not, and I shall not repeat anything you tell me. What did you say to Laura di Lucca when you unlocked her cabin door?"

Blake looked thoughtfully at the reflections of the beacons in the water. Neyrolle's question led to other questions harder to answer, even in his own mind. But he wanted to answer them if he could.

He said: "I told her that a boat was coming, and that Herriot would shoot her if she came up on deck."

"You expected it to bring her on deck?"

"I hoped that it would. A promise of death was the only way I could reach her." Blake was heartened that he saw no condemnation in the faces of any of his listeners. He went on: "I didn't intend that she should die. I needed a diversion to take the gun out of Freddy's back. I was certain that I'd be faster than he was, but I was wrong. And so she died."

Valentina said: "She welcomed death. She would have been grateful."

Blake said nothing. He had answered Neyrolle's question, if not his own.

The four sat around a candlelit table that César had set up on the Angel's afterdeck. The steward and the cook alone of the crew remained in Freddy's service. The Belgian baroness had served her writ, and the yacht would lie at her moorings until the courts decided the ownership.

Freddy's invitation to a last dinner aboard had been extended to Marian Ellis and George Samson as well as to the others, but both had declined with palpably flimsy excuses. Freddy had taken the excuses in good grace. In an earlier day he would have been angered that he could not command their presence. A short week had worked great changes in Freddy Farr.

Five days had passed since the Angel came into port with the bodies of Jules and Herriot under a tarpaulin on her foredeck, and with Laura di Lucca lying dead in the saloon.

The interval had been a difficult period for the survivors of the cruise. There had been days of endless publicity. George Samson had got in with his own account of the affair a clear twenty-four hours ahead of all competitors, but after that Freddy had been fair game for the reporters who had descended on Monaco in hordes.

"I'm sorry George couldn't come," Freddy said. "I'm saving a piece of news for him. You tell them, Valentina."

Neyrolle lifted his brandy glass politely to Valentina. "Mademoiselle?"

"Madame." She smiled at Freddy. In the mellow glow of the candle

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flames, she was more spectacularly beautiful than ever. "Since this afternoon."

Neyrolle's congratulations were as sincere as his surprise was genuine. He said: "I thought I knew everything important that goes on in the principality. You keep a secret well."

"It didn't happen in the principality," Freddy said. "We drove down to Menton. I wanted to give it to George as an exclusive, if I could. He's kind of become my official biographer—and I can't forget the risk he took to come out in the pilot boat." He added quickly: "Of course you and your men took the same risk. I don't mean that I'm not just as grateful to you. More so, even."

"You need not feel indebted to any of us." Neyrolle swirled the cognac in his glass, and inhaled the bouquet. "For Corsi and me, it was part of our work. And George Samson did not take the risk on your behalf."

THERE was silence at the table for a moment. Valentina broke it. She said: "Why *did* he take the risk?"

"I am not quite certain. Primarily, I think, to be the first to speak with Marian Ellis when she was released from imprisonment. It was she, you will remember, whom he was most anxious to find when we first came aboard."

Blake said: "They'd known each other in Paris. You'd found that out yourself. Naturally he would be worried about her."

"Perhaps," Neyrolle said. "But my experience with George Samson leads me to question his exposure of himself to probable gunfire in a small boat simply to be assured of someone else's safety."

"Why did he do it, then?"

"Probably for the same reason that he punched a man who once accosted Mademoiselle Ellis in Paris."

"Why was that?"

"I am not certain," Neyrolle answered pleasantly.

Blake felt a growing irritation with the *sous-chef*. He did not like George Samson, but Neyrolle's hints struck him as a detraction behind the reporter's back. And the coupling of Marian's name to the same hints disturbed him still more.

He said: "Samson probably punched him because he needed punching." He got up. "I'd like to be excused now, if you don't mind. I've got a lot to do tonight."

"But we're celebrating," Freddy protested. "This is my wedding day. Forget the Angel until tomorrow and have another cognac. César!"

Blake shook his head. "I'm afraid not. I've got an announcement of my own to make. Tomorrow I'm leaving the Angel. I'm handing in my notice."

The candle flames flickered in a light breath of air. They were burning straight and clear again before Freddy said unbelievingly: "No, Jim! Why? What have I done wrong?"

Blake said: "You haven't done anything wrong. You've started doing things right. I began liking you about a week ago, and I won't go on taking your money." He hesitated. "Let me put it this way: the Angel is going to be tied up for a while and I don't feel like being tied up with her."

He walked quickly away, to end the uncomfortable moment. His departure was churlish. He knew it and was ashamed of it. But the conversation at the dinner table had become distasteful to him, and he had already delayed his announcement to the last possible moment. He had wanted Freddy to have the certainty of Valentina's companionship before he withdrew his own.

That he had fallen in love with Marian was a truth he had accepted only since their return to Monaco. He had seen her only occasionally, and then always with George Samson.

It was jealousy and nothing else that had brought the hard fact home to him. He had lived too long without love to yearn vainly for another man's woman if she could be won away; and, if she could not be won, he had to know it.

A declaration would force the issue and now, at last, he was free to make it.

He was in the wheelhouse gathering up his navigation instruments when a taxi came along the quay. It stopped opposite the Angel and in the quiet of the still night Blake could hear the dying wheeze of its engine as its driver shut off the ignition.

Afterwards there were voices, a man's and a woman's; barely audible at first, then rising in altercation. The argument ended with a woman's sharp "No!" a man's oath, and the hurried click of running heels on the cobbles of the jetty. . . .

Blake had heard those same clicking heels in flight before, and he did not hesitate in his own charge out of the wheelhouse towards the after-ladder. The candlelit table had been removed from the deck below. In its place were deck-chairs and three dark figures in the immobile listening attitudes of people whose conversation has been interrupted by an alarm. Blake was quicker than any of them in getting to the head of the gangplank and the light switch over it.

The bright cone of the light threw a glare on the figures struggling together on the jetty. George Samson held Marian by the wrist and was pulling her back towards the taxi waiting on the quay.

Blake shouted: "Let her go."

George's face was ugly when he looked up into the glare of the light. He said: "Stay out of this."

"Let her go," Blake repeated. He went down the gangplank, his shadow looming black and large before him.

George had released the girl before he reached them. Marian was rubbing her wrist. Her expression was defiant and fearful at the same time. She said: "Is Neyrolle here?"

From the darkness of the after-deck, Neyrolle's voice said: "What do you want with me, mademoiselle?"

"I have something to say." Marian spoke to Blake without looking at him. "May I go aboard, Captain?"

"We'll both go aboard," George said angrily. "If you're going on with this nonsense, I want to be there to hear it. You stubborn, stupid little nitwit!"

Blake followed them aboard. On deck Marian said: "Could we go inside the saloon please? I'd like to be able to see."

There was a compulsiveness about her that took them all to the saloon, silently and without question. No one

HOME—4

Make home happy and you will be happy at home.

C. H. Spurgeon

sat down. Marian faced them with a half-fearful, half-defiant look on her face. There was a red mark on her wrist where George Samson's fingers had hurt her.

"I'm sorry, I couldn't come to your party," she said to Freddy. "It would have been under false pretences, and I've stopped pretending to—to anybody."

"For the last time, will you stop this nonsense?" George said.

"You needn't listen. I didn't ask you to come." Marian spoke to Freddy with a kind of breathless urgency. "I'm leaving for Paris in the morning. I don't expect you'll see me again. Before I go, I think you ought to know that I came here to Monaco to see if I could meet you and interest you in . . . in the way the Belgian baroness interested you.

"George gave me the idea, in Paris. He had been studying you for a long time, reading about you in the newspapers, talking to people who knew you, and he had a scheme to use a girl to take your money. I was——"

"Liar!" George said.

"I was to be the girl," Marian said. "The newspaper article he was writing was an excuse to learn all he could about you and then meet you, so he could introduce me to you. He

"There goes our good idea of shopping early for Christmas"

drew up an agreement for me to sign, promising to divide anything I was able to get from you. . . ."

"Liar!" George said. "It was an ordinary employment contract——"

"In return for a wardrobe he was going to buy me, and the introduction." Marian went on. She was speaking with breathless urgency. "I was sick of the cabaret, I hated dancing night after night for drunken tourists." She paused briefly, then continued: "I'm not defending myself—only trying to explain why I did it."

"Get back to my villainy," George taunted her. "Tell them how I led you astray."

"I never pretended that you led me astray," Marian retorted. "I wanted to do it. I wanted to have money and nice clothes, and to be able to gamble at the casino, and see my picture in the paper as Freddy Farr's guest aboard the Angel. . . . And then, suddenly, it all seemed so shabby and mean and indecent that I just couldn't go through with it."

"Liar!" George said.

"How did you meet Herriot?" Neyrolle asked quietly.

Marian said: "I watched the Angel for several days, looking for my chance. He was watching the yacht, too, I suppose, and saw me. He moved into my *pension* afterwards, to find out what I was up to—and I told him I was trying to get up the nerve to ask Freddy for a loan because I hadn't any money left and everyone knew how generous he was to pretty girls." She finished in a low voice: "You know the rest."

"Now hear *my* story," George said. "She came to me in Paris. . . ."

Neyrolle cut him short. "You have told me several stories," he said. "I am only now beginning to understand your anxiety to be the first to speak with Miss Ellis when we boarded the Angel. Tell me, mademoiselle—was he afraid that you had joined forces with Herriot?"

"He accused me of it, when he came aboard with you from the pilot boat."

"I see. And you still had the contract, the agreement he had drawn up for a division of Monsieur Farr's money? If you had been implicated in Herriot's plot, such a contract would have connected Mr. Samson with you and implicated him also. No doubt that was worrying him greatly."

"I didn't have the contract with me. It's in Paris."

"You're both distorting the truth," George raged. "I haven't done anything you could charge me with, even if the trick had come off. Freddy doesn't have to give his women yachts and diamond ear-rings. Nobody forces him. If he wants to be a mug, it's up to him."

"My official biographer," Freddy said. "Thanks, pal."

George said scornfully: "You're a mug. You always will be. Women will rob you and laugh at you for it as long as you live. What do you think this woman"—he tossed a contemptuous shrug at Valentina—"is hanging around you for?"

Freddy clenched his fists and half rose. Valentina caught his arm. She said: "No, Freddy. Don't hit him on my account, please."

BLAKE was watching Marian. He felt certain that he, not Freddy or Neyrolle, had drawn her to the Angel to make her shamed confession. He wished she would look at him. He needed no words to make his declaration now.

George noticed the direction of his stare and laughed. "Don't waste any love-sick stares on her, Captain," he mocked. "In Paris I had to beat them off her with a stick. She's——"

Blake hit him. It was a clumsy blow. It knocked George off balance without knocking him down. Blake followed it up with a wild attack without bothering about self-defence.

He took a fierce pleasure in the interchange of blows, even in George's ability to stand up to him. Herriot had been too small for him to fight, Jules too powerful, and against neither man had he been able to feel the animal fury that now drove him against his physical match, impervious to pain, reckless of hurt.

He did not hear Marian say, pleadingly: "Not because of me—please Jim!" He was aware of nothing but the fight and the man he fought until, disappointingly and unexpectedly, George went down.

Blake had not yet expended his rage. George was limp, conscious but barely so, when Blake heaved that loose body up on to his shoulder and took it along the jetty to where the taxi still waited. He managed to push George into the car.

"Take him . . ." he said to the taxi driver, and leaned against the car for support, "Take him. . . ." Stupidly he did not know how to finish.

Behind him, Neyrolle said: "I'll take him, Captain. I have a dossier to close tonight. Go back now."

As he spoke Neyrolle took Blake by the arm and gently turned him round. Marian was coming towards him, alone on the jetty.

She moved hesitantly at first, then more quickly when he spoke her name. When he reached out to her, she ran the last few steps. Then she was in his arms, clinging to him.

Blake held her for a long moment. Then he said gravely: "You've got to be more careful about running on cobbles. You'll really sprain your ankle one of these days."

THE END

David Dodge's story will be published by Michael Joseph as a book called "Ransom Of The Angel." It will cost 12s. 6d.

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and here's how!

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The small woman

Continued from page 13

woman. They won't bother about me."

It was three o'clock in the afternoon. Muller's was almost empty. He had time, therefore, to explain gently and dispassionately how important a communication link the China Eastern Railway was to both the Russians and the Chinese. He explained that the Chinese, spurred on by a young war-lord named Chang Hsüeh-liang, were trying to force the Russians to abandon all claims to the link-line which crossed Manchuria and connected with the Trans-Siberian Railway. An undeclared war was in progress. No guarantee would be possible for the safety of one young woman, even armed with that magical document, a British passport.

At the end of his speech she still regarded him steadily; the small hand in the worn glove still pushed the three £1 notes in his direction.

"It'll be all over by the time I get the rest of the money, I'm sure," she said. "If you'll order me a ticket I'll bring in my money every week until I've paid the balance. Is that all right?"

The elderly clerk looked at her carefully.

Then he sighed, picked up the £3 and, defeated, reached for his receipt book.

"Very well, madam," he said. "I don't know what the management would think about this, but I expect it will be all right."

Exactly what she thought she would be able to do when she arrived in China without a penny in her pocket, understanding not one word of the language, she hardly knew herself.

"I must learn to preach," she said to herself. "I must learn to talk to the people."

In every moment of spare time she went to Hyde Park or to any street corner, where she mounted literally a soap box and preached mainly to an iconoclastic and often a jeering audience. Tired Londoners, moving Tubewards in the evenings, were startled on street corners to find themselves exhorted by a small girl in a black dress to turn, not homewards, but to God.

Then she had her first piece of luck. From a friend she heard of Mrs. Lawson. "A dear old soul, my dear. Seventy-three and still working away as a missionary in China. She came back to England last year to retire, but she couldn't stand it. So she returned to China; she said she'd sooner end her days out there. She wrote only a few days ago saying that she wished she could find some younger woman who could carry on with her work."

Gladys Aylward whispered weakly: "That's me! That's me!"

She wrote off at once: *Could she help her? Could she join her? Could she come to China?*

Now it became imperative that she save the money for the train ticket. In the Belgrave Square household she was willing to do anything. No chore was too long or arduous. She put down her name at various employment agencies offering her services to work on her day off, to work weekends, to serve at banquets, to carry trays at society parties, to work all day and all night if necessary.

By now the clerk at Muller's was an old friend, accustomed to the enthusiastic young woman who appeared every Friday, bearing sums which would be counted out in pennies and shillings and entered against the magical total—£47 10s.

Then came that wonderful morning when the letter bearing the bizarre Chinese stamps arrived. It told her that if she could manage to get to Tientsin by herself, a messenger would meet her there and guide her to wherever Mrs. Lawson was working.

"I'm going to China," she said to all her friends. "I'm going to China."

Gladys Aylward left Liverpool Street Station on Saturday, October 18, 1930, possessing in currency exactly 9d. in coin and two £1 Travellers' Cheques. The cheques were sewn carefully into an old corset given by her mother. The corset contained, besides the cheques, her Bible, her fountain pen, her tickets and her passport.

She kissed her mother and father and sister goodbye, and settled herself into a corner seat of her third-class compartment. She dried her eyes, sat back and spread out on the seat beside her the old fur coat which a friend had given her.

Her two suitcases were on the rack. One contained her clothes, the other an odd assortment of tins of corned beef, fish and baked beans, biscuits, soda cakes, meat cubes, coffee essence, tea, and hard-boiled eggs. She also had a saucepan, a kettle and a spirit stove. The kettle and the saucepan were tied to the handle of the suitcase with a piece of string.

She crossed by sea to The Hague, tipped the porter who carried her bags the ninepence in coppers and secured a corner seat in the train. From Holland the train rattled across Germany, Poland and into the great Steppes of Russia. She sat "facing the engine," cocooned in the fur, and watched the Continent slide past.

The main station at Moscow was full of soldiers. They carried their bread ration under their arms, broke off a piece to munch when they felt hungry.

To the meticulous Miss Aylward, cooking herself an egg with a Ryvita biscuit spread with a little butter for breakfast, and having "elevenses" of Oxo cube in the hot water she boiled in her kettle, the rough-looking, bundled, bearded men who spat on the ground and blew their noses on their fingers were alien and a little horrible.

Once or twice a day she took gentle exercise along the corridor of the train, and occasionally, when the engine stopped to take on wood, all the passengers disembarked to stretch their legs and replenish their water supply.

Ten days after she had left England, the train crossed into Siberia, and she was at once enchanted by the grandeur of the scenery; the towering mountains, the great belts of dark pines, the endlessly stretching snow, the bright sunshine, and the immense loneliness.

At one halt a man who could speak a little English got into her compartment, and through him the other people, who had long ago tired of trying to ask her questions in sign language, now began to satiate their curiosity. He was a kindly man and he conveyed to Gladys that the conductor of the train who had examined her tickets wished to tell her that no trains were running to Harbin, and that she would probably be held up at the Siberian-Manchurian border. If this were true, her chances were remote of proceeding onwards through Harbin to Dairen, and so from there by steamer to Tientsin.

To increase her fears, at each station halt more and more soldiers crowded on to the train.

At Chita the train emptied of all civilians, except Gladys. The conductor came along and with fantastic signs tried to entice her out on to the platform. Gladys, however, now firmly rooted in the compartment, was having none of it; she believed that every mile forward was a mile towards China. She stayed put.

The train filled up with soldiers and rumbled onwards. A few hours later, in the darkness it halted again at a tiny station and the soldiers got out, formed up on the platform and marched off up the line into the darkness. The train lights went out. She took a short walk up the corridor and satisfied herself that she was the only person left aboard. Then, borne on the thin, freezing wind, came a noise which, even although she had never heard it before, she recognized immediately.

The sound of gunfire! Rumbling, ominous, terrifying!

She poked her head out of the carriage window and saw the distant flashes light the sky. She scrambled her belongings together.

Laden down by the bags and fur, she wandered down the platform and, in a small hut by the track, found four men clustered round a stove — the engine driver, stoker, the stationmaster and the conductor who had unsuccessfully urged her to get off the train at Chita.

They made her a cup of strong coffee and, with a running commentary amplified by gymnastic gesticulations, reiterated the fact that she had, indeed, reached the end of the line. Beyond was the battlefield.

The train, they said, would remain at this halt for days, perhaps weeks, until such time as it was needed, then it would take wounded back to hospitals behind the line. They pointed down the track the way they had come. *"Go back!"*

The line wound drearily among snow-covered pines. It ducked through dark tunnels; it was hemmed in by high mountains; the snow in between the sleepers was thick and soft; icicles hung from the trees. But to walk back to Chita, they said, was her only hope.

She set off. Not many miles from the Manchurian border, the Siberian wind gusting the powdered snow around her heels, a suitcase in either hand, one still decorated ludicrously with kettle and saucepan, she crunched off into the night, a slight, Chaplinesque figure, dwarfed by the tall, sombre trees, the towering mountains and black sky, diamond-bright with stars.

Four hours later when the cold and exhaustion became too much for her, she sat down in the snow and ice, lit her spirit stove and boiled some water for her coffee essence. She ate two soda cakes and felt miserable. She decided she must sleep at least for an hour or two. She arranged her suitcases into a windbreak, scooped up snow to fill the cracks, wrapped herself firmly into her old fur and lay down. Drowsily, she listened to the noise of far-off howling, and said to herself: *Now I wonder who let all those dogs out at this time of night? Noisy lot!* Not until a couple of years later in China did she realize that she had heard a hunting wolf-pack.

A pale dawn was lighting the mountains when she woke up, stiff but refreshed. She made herself more coffee, ate another soda cake, gathered up her luggage and set off again along the interminable railway track. Late that night, staggering along, almost unconscious with cold and weariness, she saw the lights of Chita gleaming far down the track.

She struggled onwards, lifted herself wearily on to the platform, dropped her suitcases and draped herself on top of them.

During the night no one came near her, and Gladys dozed intermittently under her fur. Next morning a succession of station officials came to look at her, nod their heads and depart.

Anything they said made no sense to her. She continued to camp out on the platform in the bitter cold. No one seemed to care. She dozed occasionally, but now she was getting colder and stiffer.

She eyed an official in a red cap coming along the platform towards her. Then she perceived that he was accompanied by three soldiers. In mime, he conveyed to her that she was under arrest and must come with him.

Gathering up her baggage she followed him along the platform and into

MY BROTHER

Ronald

I WAS much younger than Ronald and was always made to play the stooge in his ingenious games. He went through a phase of wanting to be a fireman, and one day he tied about eight sheets together, fixing one end to the bedpost and wrapping the other end round me. I was then carefully lowered from the top-floor window; but unfortunately the "chief" had misjudged the distance and I was left dangling about seven feet above the ground.

Ronald desperately tried to haul me up again, but just at that minute our father appeared on the scene, saw me suspended in mid-air and rushed to my rescue with a ladder. I had enjoyed the whole incident immensely but was given sweets and chocolates while my poor brother, who had been terrified, was given a good hiding.

My brother was the ringleader in every game, and he made friends with all the children in our neighbourhood close to Hampstead Heath. One little girl named Gladys, who liked Ronald enormously, was given a bicycle for a present and this filled him with furious envy. She came up to us when we were playing in the street and asked Ronald if he knew anything about riding a bike.

"Everything," he replied, and offered to teach her to ride. He was so jealous, however, that he locked the handlebars of the bike, and sent the girl off with a shove. She fell, but she must have forgiven him for they are now married to each other.

Ronald never worked very hard at school, and left at the age of fourteen. He wasn't at all sure what he wanted to do and eventually entered an insurance firm as a clerk. However, all he seemed to do was to play chess—starting a game at lunchtime, and continuing to play all the afternoon under the desk.

One day he was caught by his boss and so, to Ronald's secret delight, ended his career in the insurance world.

His next job filled me with admiration. His best friend rushed to Ronald one day with an advertisement he had discovered in a magazine advising all young boys with a desire for adventure to try to join the Royal North West Mounted Police of Canada. Ronald applied and was accepted.

He was in Canada for only three years. But he has since spent all his life using his knowledge of the police force—and the army—in the many comic rôles he has played.

WHO IS THIS FAMOUS BROTHER? See page 49

The bathside book to give for Christmas

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a side room. It was so filthy and stank so abominably that she was almost sick. The door was locked and there she was left. She preferred the cold of the platform.

Later that day the door was opened and she was led into another room. An interrogator managed to make her understand that he spoke English. Gladys was pleased to understand this, but it didn't seem to get them any farther. He talked for a long time. She could make out almost nothing of what he was trying to say. Eventually he left her. Gladys got out her bedroll —this room didn't smell so much—and under the incurious eye of the soldier who had been left to guard her went fast asleep.

Next day the interrogation continued. They examined her shiny new passport and spent an interminable time discussing the entry that read: "Profession—Missionary." This they seemed to be suggesting had something to do with "machinery." They also seemed to be hinting that she might like to stay in Russia; they had need of people like her.

During these years many young Communists from all over the world were flocking to Soviet Russia anxious to play their part in building a proletarian Utopia. That Gladys Aylward was mistaken for one of them is not unusual, but the mistake terrified her. Frantically, she thumbed through her Bible which had a coloured picture text inside it, and showed them scenes of biblical times. It seemed to do some good. That afternoon the official escorted her to a train and managed to convey to her that she must change at a place called Nikolshissur Junction, then catch a connection to Pogranilchnai, and so continue to Harbin.

A few hours later she disembarked at Nikolshissur. The connection to Pogranilchnai? No one spoke English; no one understood a word of her request.

It was now late. Surrounded by her baggage, she settled down to spend a night on the station platform. It was so bitterly cold she thought she would freeze to death.

Next morning she brewed her morning coffee on her spirit stove, ate two of the inevitable soda cakes, parked her luggage at the station cloakroom and went off in search of some sort of government offices.

She found them, but nobody there spoke English. She was shown eventually into an office and a man interviewed her. Gladys, by now, was used to exhibiting her Bible and drawing pictures, but on this occasion, in a moment of inspiration, she pulled out a picture of her brother Laurie. It showed him in the full dress of a drummer in the British Army. Whether or not they thought she had any army connections she never found out, but the picture produced instantaneous and electrifying results.

With a sudden spurt of understanding they seemed to know exactly what she wanted. She was whisked off first to the station cloakroom to collect her baggage and then to an hotel where she spent the night. The next day she was escorted to a train, her tickets were altered and she was re-routed to Vladivostock.

On the platform at Vladivostock no one took much notice of her. The collector examined her ticket and let her out through the barrier. On the station wall she saw a poster advertising "Intourist Hotel" and decided to go there. By trying various phonetical intonations on passers-by she eventually reached its doors.

The hotel clerk signed her in. A thick-set interpreter with a pale Mongolian face and wearing a creased suit and no collar examined her passport and pocketed it. As far as Gladys could understand, he was something to do with the police. The word "Ogpu" —the Russian secret police—meant nothing to her.

From then onwards he attached himself to her. He insisted upon showing her the sights of Vladivostock, and what she saw horrified her: the filthy unpaved roads full of water-filled potholes, the long food queues; the women in kimonos, eyes dark with hunger and weariness, babies on their backs; the shabby unpainted buildings; the clattering trams packed with unwashed, ragged passengers.

"Look! There's our problem"

That afternoon she stood with him at a corner and watched one of these trams draw to a standstill. A thin half-starved woman ran to get on. The reason for the altercation Gladys never understood, but she saw the packed crowd of men threatening the new passenger; then she saw them, just as the car was moving off, pick up the woman and throw her into the roadway.

The woman fell with a thud and rolled over in the mud. The men screamed and jeered at her. Slowly she got up. She was weeping in such silent and bitter distress that Gladys's heart moved out to her. She took a step in her direction, but the man's hand on her arm restrained her. Her head bowed low, the woman trudged up the windy street after the tram. The impression of her face still remained in the mud; the rain would wash it away.

The next morning, the pale-faced interpreter was waiting outside Gladys's bedroom door. She sensed somehow that his unctuous attitude had changed.

As they went down the stairs, she said: "Shall I be able to get my connection to Harbin soon?"

He looked at her sideways: "Why do you wish to go to the barbaric land of China? In this country of immense revolution you have a future. You are young, you could work here. We need people with skill like you."

Gladys looked straight ahead, tried to make each movement of her limbs a normal, ordinary reaction. She tried to conceal the sudden quickening fear his words had started in her. "But I have no skill. I only want to be a missionary."

"What is the point of proceeding farther? You can work here just as well as China. We need people like you who can handle machines. . . ."

"Machines! I've never worked a machine in my life."

"You should stay here," he said. "China is a long way off. We will see that you are taken care of."

Gladys was now more worried than she had been since the journey started. It seemed plain that this man had received instructions from someone to delay her.

As she entered the hotel foyer on her return, she was conscious that someone was walking close behind her. The Ogpu man had gone back to his post at the desk. She glanced over her shoulder. It was a girl, dark, plainly dressed, but attractive. The girl drew level with her. Without turning her head she whispered in good, if strongly accented, English: "I must speak to you. It is important."

In mesmerized fashion Gladys allowed the girl to precede her, and followed her into the corridor. The girl took her arm and steered her into a dark corner. "I waited until I was sure the Ogpu man had left you," she said.

"But I don't understand. Who are you?"

"It doesn't matter now. What matters is that you are in danger."

"But what can I do?" Gladys said anxiously.

The girl's voice was urgent. "You want to get out, don't you? If you don't get out *now*, you never will."

Gladys's tightly compressed lips seemed to stick together. Again she felt the quick shock of fright.

"I'm a British subject. I've got a passport." She fumbled in her bag, and suddenly remembered. The man had not returned it.

The girl's eyes were fixed on her, reading her thoughts. "They still have it? You must get it back! They need skilled factory workers desperately. If they decide to, they can send you off somewhere in the middle of Russia and you'll never be heard of again. Examine your passport when they return it."

There was utter horror in Gladys's voice now. "But what am I to do?"

"Listen. Tonight after midnight be dressed and have your baggage ready. A knock will come on your door. Open it and follow the man outside. Do not speak to him. Simply follow him. You understand? And ask them for your passport back."

Gladys nodded her head weakly. She walked back to the desk in the foyer. The Ogpu man was sitting on a tilted chair smoking a cigarette. He looked contemptuously up at her.

"My passport?" said Gladys. "I would like my passport back."

He rocked his chair back to floor level, took the cigarette out of his mouth, and blew out smoke. "It is still being examined. I will bring it back to you—this evening."

That night Gladys sat in the cold bedroom after eating her supper. She hadn't enjoyed the biscuits and the tinned fish very much. A knock came on the door. She walked across and opened it. It was the Ogpu man, grinning, waving the passport tantalizingly in one hand. He put his foot in the door.

Instinctively warned, with a quick movement Gladys reached up and snatched the passport from his hand and flicked it over her head into the bedroom. The bitter, sardonic grin on his face frightened her.

He forced the door wide open and stepped inside.

"Don't you dare come in here," said Gladys. "Get out! Get out!"

"I am coming in and you won't stop me," he snapped back.

She was so astonished that she allowed him to take three steps towards her before she leaped backwards. She declaimed wildly: "God will protect me! God will protect me!"

The man stopped. He looked puzzled. He stared at the small embodiment of virtue, rooted dramatically in front of him, and started to grin. The grin turned into a laugh, then into a roar of laughter. Astonished, but implacable, Gladys glared at him. Abruptly his mood changed. He swore at her savagely, cursed her in Russian and English. He waved his hand threateningly, thought better of it, and took a few steps backwards out of the door. He slammed it behind him. Gladys dived at the bolt and thrust it home.

She picked up her passport, flipped through the pages. Her fingers trembled as she saw what they had done. The word "Missionary" in the line marked "Profession" had been altered to "Machinist."

She crammed the passport into her bag, hauled her suitcases from under the bed and began to pile in her belongings. She had to leave that night; she must escape.

She finished her packing and sat on the bed trembling, waiting for midnight, praying that the knock on the door would rescue her. Was the girl telling the truth, or was the story some part of a plan to trap her? She didn't care. She had to take a chance. She had to get away.

The knock was so gentle that she hardly heard it. She hesitated before unlocking the door, then decided she must go through with it. A strange man in a drab mackintosh and a trilby hat stood outside. It was so dark she could hardly see his face.

He motioned to her to come out and held the door open while she bundled through with her suitcases. Then he went on ahead and she followed him along the corridor, down the stairs and past the reception desk. The clerk was nodding in his chair by the stove; there was no sign of the Ogpu man.

The streets were unlit and Gladys stumbled continually into potholes. Against the night sky she could see the thin shape of dockside cranes. Soon they were stumbling over railway lines embedded in cobblestones. From the shadow of a pile of packing cases another figure stepped out. It was the girl, and with a sigh of thankfulness Gladys hurried towards her.

The girl pointed to the black bulk of a ship looming beyond the dark sheds and cranes. "That is a Japanese ship. It sails for Japan at dawn. You must be on it."

"Japan? I've got no money. . . ." Gladys's voice rose into a wail.

"You'll find the captain of the ship in that small wooden hut over there. You must go and see him. Plead with him, tell him you are in great trouble. You *must* leave on that ship. . . ."

"All right, I'll try." Gladys's voice was doubtful.

The girl stood there in the darkness.

"What about you? I haven't even thanked you for what you have done. Why have you helped me like this?" Gladys asked.

"You needed help." The girl's voice was low and sad.

"But how can I thank you? What can I give you? I have no money."

"You have perhaps . . . clothes?"

Gladys had nothing except what she

MY BROTHER RONALD

See page 47

Ronald Shiner, the comedy actor, is Miss Joan Shiner's famous brother

"Relax!" says
BOB MONKHOUSE
famous star of T.V., radio and films

the lucky beggar will love

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DRESSING GOWNS
for men... for boys... for Christmas

McGregor? That means style superlative, good material cut for comfort, a price that's obviously reasonable. A McGregor dressing-gown, boxed as a gift should be, starts at about 65/-, and varies only according to material. Look out for McGregor in outfitters' windows. They're unmistakable!

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LONDON, N.W.2

wore against the bitter cold, but she had to show her gratitude somehow. She whipped off her gloves.

"Here, take these, please. And"—she remembered something—"these stockings." She fumbled in her coat pocket and produced a pair she had thrust there in her hurry. "They're old and darned, but please have them."

The girl took them. "Thank you," she said quietly. "Good luck!" Their hands touched for a moment in the darkness. . . .

Gladys pushed open the door of the little hut. A naked light hung from the roof. There was a bare wooden table piled with papers. On the other side of it sat a young Japanese in merchant marine uniform. He looked up gravely as she came in.

She put down her bundles and looked at him.

"Please," she said, "are you the captain of that boat? I'm English and I must get on it. I *must* get on it"

He looked at her impassively. Then he said in excellent English: "Good morning. Please speak slowly. What is it you wish?"

"I want to go to Japan on your ship."

"Indeed! Have you the money to pay your fare?"

"No. Nothing!"

"You say you are a British subject? You have a passport?"

Gladys fished her passport out of her bag and handed it to him. He leafed through it carefully. As she watched him, Gladys had a feeling that he had done this many times.

"A British subject in trouble—we really cannot have that, can we? Yes, I will take you on my ship. If you will come with me, I will find you a cabin."

THREE days later the ship steamed into the small port of Tsurugaoka on the east coast of Japan. To the south was Kobe and from there, the captain explained, she would be able to catch a boat to China. He also informed her that she would have to wait on board while he got in touch with the British Consul.

Not long after they docked, therefore, a rather disconcerted but extremely pleasant young Englishman arrived to interview her.

He said: "It's all rather difficult. I wonder what we can do for you now?"

"I shall be quite all right when I reach Kobe," said Gladys firmly.

"In that case I'll get you a ticket to Kobe, and put you on a train straight away," he said quickly.

On the platform at Kobe she saw a sign in European lettering which said "Tourist Bureau." She walked in and approached the counter clerk. Although she could not get much sense out of him, she did change one of her travellers' cheques and received a bewildering assortment of yen. She walked out into the dazzle of bright autumn sunshine. At the station entrance, before she could protest, she was seized by a rickshaw boy, piled into his flimsy two-wheeled vehicle, festooned with her luggage and then borne at speed through the traffic-filled streets of Kobe.

And suddenly she saw among the alien shop signs a notice board nailed with a cross and above it the words, "Mission Hall."

She dismounted.

A pleasant Japanese inside spoke a little English. He directed her rickshaw boy to the house of the English missionaries who, he felt, would be happy to receive her. Indeed, the Dyers, the English missionaries at Kobe, were delighted to meet their unexpected caller. They listened to the story of her adventures.

"But if you paid for tickets to Tientsin the travel people should get you there no matter how you were diverted," Mr. Dyer said seriously. "Give me all the tickets you have left and I'll see the agency people here tomorrow."

They gave her a bath in a large wooden tub, Japanese style, which nearly boiled her to death, and put her to bed in a pretty room lit by a Japanese lantern of red and blue. It

was the first good night's sleep she had had since leaving England.

The next morning, after a session with Cook's tourist agency, Mr. Dyer reappeared bearing an envelope containing a steamship ticket from Kobe to Tientsin.

At Tientsin Gladys found a large mission with a European staff where they trained many Chinese converts. Yes, they had heard of Mrs. Lawson. As far as they knew she was in the territory of Shansi in north China at a mission station in an old walled town called Tsehchow. It was north of the Yellow River in very wild and mountainous territory. It would take many weeks to reach there. They would see if they could scout around and find a guide who could take her part of the way into the hinterland. Meanwhile, they would be glad to put her up.

Seven days later, as the train drew out of Tientsin station away from the sprawl of westernized suburbs, Gladys felt the pulse of the train wheels echo her own excitement. Ninety miles to Peking, and then on for days and days into the wilderness!

Mr. Lu, a sober young man, a Christian, in a dark Chinese robe and a trilby hat, was to accompany her for some of the journey. He had business in Shansi.

Gladys had changed her last travellers' cheque in order to buy a Chinese pass which permitted her to go inland. All the money she now possessed was six shillings. This fact did not worry her in the slightest as the train jogged, slowly at first, across the flat, uninteresting featureless landscape.

It was a bright day in late autumn and the fields, denuded of the harvest, shone with a short golden stubble. Soon, along the western horizon, an immense semi-circle of purple mountains tumbled against the sky. The countryside lost its flat dullness, and the train chugged across fertile agricultural country, past farms and mud-walled villages backed by clumps of trees. There were cemeteries enclosed by grey, stone walls and entered by magnificent ornamental gates, where lay the generations of well-loved worshipful ancestors. Along open roads sunk in the soft, fruitful earth the blue-garmented pig-tailed peasants drove their heavy two-wheeled carts drawn by shaggy Mongolian ponies.

That night they stayed at a Chinese inn in Peking, and went on again by train the next morning. The line petered out three days later at Yutse. From there on they made progress by means of ramshackle old buses. Each night now they stopped at a Chinese inn.

Privacy had disappeared; everyone slept on the *k'ang*, the communal brick bed under which flowed hot air from the stove. No one undressed; everyone endeavoured with philosophical calm to preserve a few inches of flesh from the foraging and hungry fleas and lice.

A MONTH after leaving Tientsin they arrived at Tsehchow, the city where the Tientsin mission had told Gladys that she would find Mrs. Lawson.

Two old ladies, one of whom was a Mrs. Smith, ran the mission at Tsehchow. They were both about seventy years old. They told Gladys that Mrs. Lawson had moved into the wild, mountainous area to the west, country into which Christianity had never penetrated. It was forbidding terrain; the villages were isolated; the small towns were walled and fortified. They had heard that Mrs. Lawson was living for the time being at Yangcheng, a walled town which lay two days' journey away, along the ancient mule track from Hornan to Hopeh.

"How do I get there?" asked Gladys wearily.

"My dear, the only way is by mule through the mountains," Mrs. Smith said. "The road ends here. Only tracks lead onwards. It's very rough going and there are immense stretches of lonely country. It's a day's journey to Chowchun, the first village, and then another day on to Yangcheng."

Mrs. Smith looked at her thoughtfully. "I wouldn't wear those European clothes, either, if I were you, my dear," she added kindly.

Gladys looked down at her soiled clothes. "But they're all I've got."

"We'll find you others," said Mrs. Smith. "You see, there are bandits in the mountains. They would know you are a foreigner and they might think you were rich. We can fit you out with the kind of jacket and trousers that everybody wears. Where you are going, they've probably never seen a European woman before. They're very simple, primitive people. It's better not to draw too much attention to yourself."

"I'll start for Yangcheng tomorrow if I can," said Gladys.

NEXT WEEK: Gladys Aylward "kidnaps" a mule train

"The Small Woman," by Alan Burgess, will be published next year by Evans Brothers.

HOME—5

Home is the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in.

Robert Frost

Give PYRAMID for Christmas

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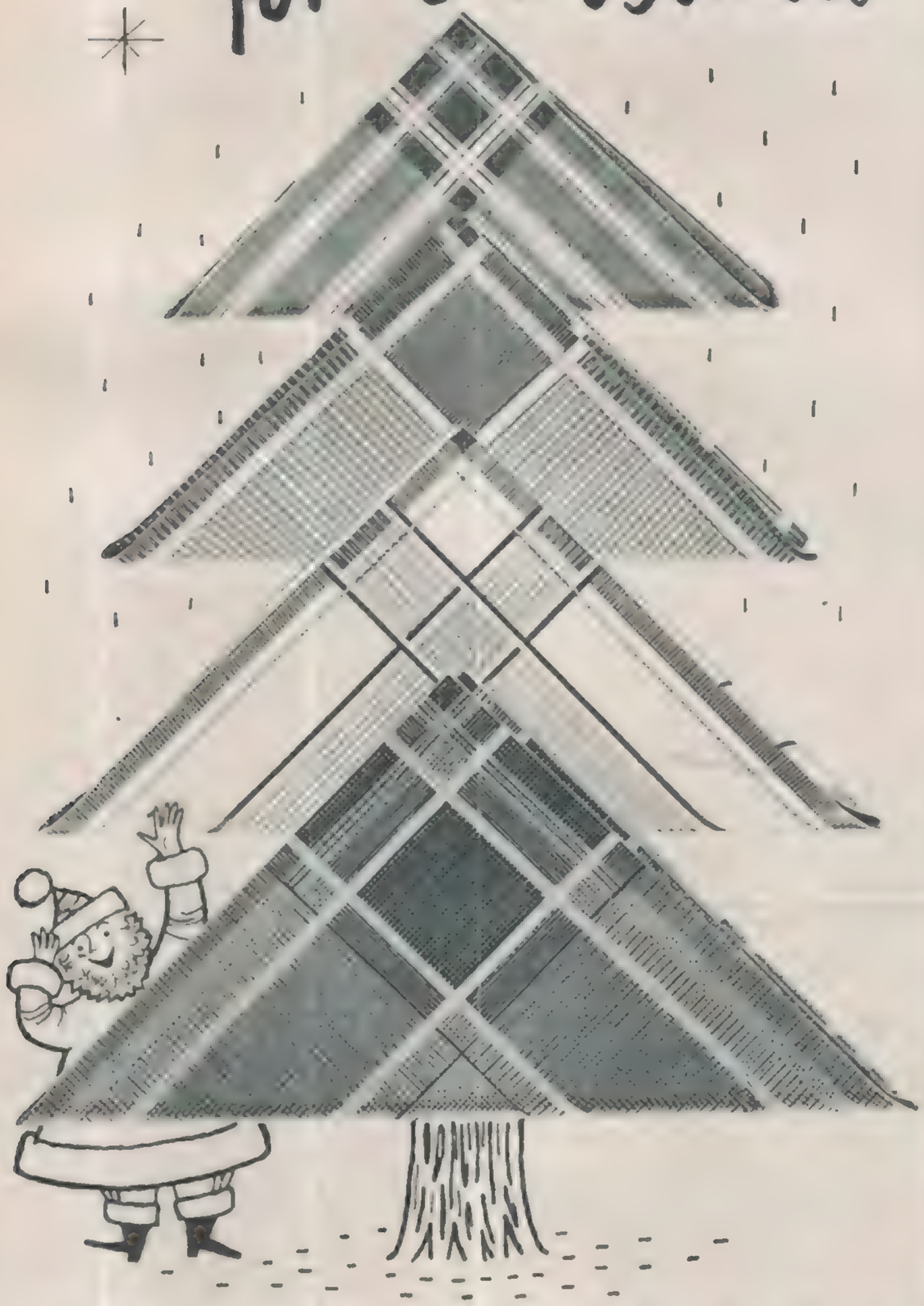

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Fashion-conscious fabrics. Glossy kid. Cream-smooth cape. Fur, sleek as a seal's back. Lace, butterfly-light on your fingers. Morley make gloves lined and unlined, gay or trim, for every occasion you can think of, for every season of the year. You'll love the attractive shades, the dainty styling, slim wrists, tapered fingers—such significant points.

He notices your gloves

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'Charmlight' is Crompton's new lamp, its brilliance subtly muted to a restful softness. By the glow of 'Charmlight' your fabrics appear fresher, your furniture richer, and you, you look your loveliest.

Crompton 'CHARMLIGHT'

'Charmlight' lamps are available in 60w. 1/11½d; 100w. 2/6½d; 150w. 3/9d tax paid.
Also a full range of other Crompton lamps in standard voltages and wattages.

The battle to save your smile

Continued from page 23

sweets, biscuits or a sweetened drink after cleaning the teeth at night is the worst thing of all.

For a long time dentists were baffled about how to tackle the primary cause of today's widespread decay—a starchy diet. To suggest radical changes was impracticable. Then, last year, Sweden's Royal Medical Board published the report of an experiment conducted in the Vipeholm mental hospital in Sweden.

The patients were divided into six main groups. Each group had sugar added to its basic diet—the first in drinks, the second in bread, the third in plain chocolate, the fourth in eight or nine toffees a day, the fifth in twenty-four toffees a day, the sixth in twenty-two pieces of caramel a day. Except for the first two groups the extra suger was eaten between meals.

The results were interesting. The group eating twenty-four toffees between meals had the highest number of new cavities—an average of more than four each per year. The groups eating eight or nine toffees and twenty-two pieces of caramel between meals had almost as many. The chocolate and bread groups had considerably less and the group which had taken extra sugar only in drinks very few. The moral was plain: it was eating between meals which did the damage.

GEOFFREY SLACK enforces a strict regimen on his daughters, Susan and Gill, aged seven and five and a half. They rinse and brush their teeth after every meal.

"They can have as many sweets as they like at the table," he says, "but I forbid all sweets, pop, ices, lollies, biscuits and other starchy snacks between meals. Neither Susan nor Gill has a single bad tooth."

A further factor in the onset of decay is the tooth itself. Some people's teeth seem to resist decay better than others'. Often this is due to purely individual causes which scientists have not yet succeeded in identifying.

"I got pushed past the only thing I fancied"

In 1941 the senior school dentist of Westmorland remarked to a Ministry of Education medical officer named Robert Weaver that children evacuated from South Shields had exceptionally good teeth.

Weaver checked and found that 117 children from South Shields had an average of only 1.4 decayed, missing or filled permanent teeth. This was far below average.

He wondered why. Since the effect was confined to children from South Shields, he looked for something peculiar to that town. The only unusual thing he could find was in the water supply. Remembering that American researchers had discovered sixty per cent less caries in the populations of towns with fluoride in the water, he asked Dr. Campbell Lyons, Medical Officer of Health for South Shields, for a fluoride analysis.

Lyons reported that South Shields water contained two parts per million of fluoride. Half this amount would have accounted for the low caries rate in the town.

To make doubly sure, Weaver compared the teeth of a thousand South Shields children with the teeth of a thousand children from North Shields, a community similar in every way to South Shields except that it has practically no fluoride in its water. He found that in North Shields children of five had an average of 6.6 decayed, missing and filled teeth and those of twelve 4.3 decayed, missing or filled permanent teeth. The comparable figures for South Shields were 3.9 and 2.4.

In America many communities without natural fluoride in their water have added it artificially. The effect on teeth has been exactly the same as that of water with natural fluoride. In 1952 the British Government sent a team of experts to study American experience. It reported favourably and the government is now paying for fluoride to be added as a practical demonstration to the water supplies of Watford, Andover, Anglesey and Kilmarnock.

Some people have opposed fluoridation on the ground that it takes away from the individual the right of deciding whether or not he wants to take fluoride. Others have suggested that fluoride may harm the body. Supporters reply that nobody has protested about chlorine, alum and a dozen other chemicals added to water supplies.

Recently the Central Health Services Council reported that there was no scientific or medical evidence that at one part in a million, the standard dosage, fluoride could harm the body.

Fluoridation is also backed by the public health committee of the British Medical Association, the British Dental Association, the Medical Research Council and the World Health Organization.

One of the reasons why dentists favour fluoridation is that it armours baby teeth against decay while they are still forming. And today they regard baby teeth as being tremendously important.

If a child loses his baby teeth before they are shed naturally the permanent teeth will crowd together. Besides making for ugliness, the crowding increases the likelihood of decay.

Slack advocates that baby teeth should be cleaned as soon as they come through and that infants should visit the dentist three times a year. He frowns on mothers who give their children dummies dipped in sugar, snacks between meals and biscuits or sweetened drinks in bed at night.

"The pre-school child is the most important of all," he says. "If we're not to be a nation of dental cripples we must start with them." THE END

Laughter at his fingertips

Continued from page 19

picking the pockets of royalty—his victims have included Fawzia, ex-wife of the Shah of Persia, the Sultan of Johore and ex-King Farouk. When he performed at Farouk's summer palace in Alexandria in 1944, he took a wallet and a cigar case from the king's pockets.

Otto, who is in his early forties, is a British subject with a cosmopolitan background. His father was Swiss, his mother English. His birthplace was Bombay, his education was at schools in India, England and Switzerland. He speaks six languages, including Hindustani and Chinese, and has travelled all over the world. Recently, he gave a performance at short notice at the Italian Embassy in London, in Italian.

A few years with his father's freight-booking firm in Bombay convinced him that he was not cut out for a career in commerce. An absorbing interest in conjuring and ventriloquism, a good tenor voice and a fair talent for acting provided him with a new career. He came to England, worked as a film extra, sang in musical comedy and then toured the provinces with his own revue company. During the war, he performed with Ensa in Africa, Italy and the Far East and developed the pickpocketing act which became his speciality as a freelance party entertainer when the war ended.

One of his first London engagements was at a business man's party in a West End hotel, from which he arrived at his home in Thames Ditton, Surrey, at midnight, and went straight to bed. At 2 a.m. the phone rang. A voice said: "I am at Hendon with a man who is a bit under the weather after the party tonight. He seems to have lost his front door key. Is there a chance that you took it from him and forgot to return it?"

In one of the pockets of his Chinese costume, Otto found a bunch of keys. "I dressed, drove to Hendon and returned the keys, arriving home at four thirty. Now, I go through my pockets carefully at the end of my act."

Otto prints his own publicity material and makes his own animated scenes, ventriloquist's dummies and most of his props, but his Chinese costumes, with secret pockets and other refinements, are made specially for him in Hongkong. They cost £70.

At children's parties, Otto's wife Lily, who accompanies him to all his engagements, makes sure that pets, ice-cream, whistles, balloons and other distractions are kept out of sight during the performance. The show usually includes magic, ventriloquism, singing, at least one animated scene with fairies, mermaids, spacemen, dragons or nursery rhyme characters, and ends with Punch and Judy.

Although he is usually able to anticipate the reactions of youngsters, Otto was surprised when the five-year-old grandson of a titled woman who asked for his Noddy puppet to be brought to life burst into tears when the puppet "talked" and waggled its limbs.

"I realized then that the puppet possessed a distinct character for that little boy. When I brought it to life, I destroyed that character. Noddy was lost and the boy saw only a perplexing stranger. I calmed the lad down by showing him the lively Punch and Judy asleep in their box and then his Noddy, quiet and still on a chair."

To focus the audience's attention, Otto keeps up a non-stop patter, limits his conjuring to fast, uncomplicated tricks—"the days of elaborate mumbo-jumbo with a wand are over"—and turns distractions to his own advantage.

On one occasion, at an R.A.F. camp during the war, Otto tried to take advantage of a distraction with alarming results. He was operating a marionette theatre. The only part of his body visible to the audience was his head, which projected through a black curtain: with his hands, he worked the arms and legs of the marionette in the Lambeth Walk dance.

The commanding officer of the camp sat in the front row with a large black Alsatian at his side. "The dog took a poor view of the act," Otto recalls. "It began growling softly. When I sang: 'Doing the Lambeth Walk—oi!' it barked. I barked back, and got a few laughs. The dog looked baffled for a moment, then leaped up on to the stage with a snarl and put its face close to mine. I felt the wet tip of its nose and its hot breath. I was scared stiff."

Rather than abandon his act, however, Otto made the marionette rush off with a shriek and climb on to a housetop which was part of the set. "It was the only way to get my head out of the dog's reach without stopping the show."

Otto depends for his pickpocketing on the middle finger of his right hand—"that's the one that undoes the watch-straps and unclips the bow ties." Last summer, he cut this finger a few hours before he was due to appear at Claridge's Hotel in London. The cut was one-sixteenth of an inch deep at the finger tip.

After hospital treatment, he returned home, changed into his Chinese costume and drove to the hotel. On the way he bought a dozen rubber cots, a type of fingerstall used by surgeons.

Just before his act, he took off the hospital's bandages and pulled on one of the cots. He was about to delve into the inner pocket of a government minister when he noticed blood seeping over the fingerstall. It would damage his prestige if he cut short his performance, and ruin his reputation if he dripped blood on to the guests' evening dress.

As he was then demonstrating a trick with a silk handkerchief, Otto used it for some improvised first aid. With a single motion, he wiped his finger, pulled off the cot and dropped the handkerchief and contents into his savant, the bag for discarded props attached to a conjurer's table. As he moved back towards his audience, he put on a new fingerstall.

A few minutes later, he noticed more blood on his hand. "The cut bled steadily throughout the act—I had to change the fingerstall in the same way eight times."

SOMETIMES after a show, Otto is asked if he makes advance arrangements with his victims. He has developed a technique for dealing with such sceptics. A young reporter who interviewed him on the stage after a charity show asked: "Do you *really* take their wrist-watches without their knowing?" Otto took his arm and led him away, saying: "Shush! Not so loud. Do you want the other artists to hear us?"

There was a smirk of self-satisfaction on the reporter's face as they reached the wings. "All right then—just how do you do it?"

"It is really quite simple," Otto replied, producing a wrist-watch from his pocket. "This one, I think, is yours."

When he demonstrated before an audience composed solely of policemen at Eastbourne a few years ago, Otto went among them to ask for volunteers. The chief constable was among those he marshalled together and led up to the stage. He lined them up and said: "You know what I am going to do and I want you to do everything you can to stop me."

As he spoke, his pockets already contained three wallets, two wrist-watches, one notebook, two fountain pens, one police whistle, a handkerchief and a piece of chalk.

"Policemen," says Otto, "are no more difficult to spoof than others, if you know how." THE END

No name on the door

Continued from page 27

a constant stream of presents from the store. She had the American love of ice-cream, and supplies of it were sent to her hotel daily. When she moved to Fontainebleau, she received her ice-cream every day by aeroplane. Selfridge himself supervised the packing and transport arrangements.

At the gambling tables, Selfridge and Jenny each had a different system of betting. Whether they won or lost made a great difference to him financially, for he always covered losses and Jenny kept the winnings; and the stakes sometimes ran into four figures.

There were fantastic scenes in which Selfridge participated with the dark, febrile Jenny at the French casinos, and from which he emerged a predestined and an automatic loser. And this man was a business genius with the coolest head and the strongest nerves I have known.

Then, after the summary execution of his finances at the gambling tables, there were the fantastic entertainments. He had always been a generous host, but his parties in France at this period

HOME—6

Home is where the heart is.

Pliny

surpassed in loud display and prodigal expenditure anything he ever staged in London. The well-bred austerity which always marked the entertainments at Lansdowne House gave way in France to a lavishness which verged on the vulgar.

"He seemed to be there on sufferance," a friend who had been to a party at Deauville told me. "He sat on a settee and nobody took any notice of him. It was a pretty riotous affair, and the only restful things in the place were the furniture and that white-haired old man sitting all alone."

Selfridge shared Jenny Dolly's passion for gambling; the lady shared his business ambitions. Thus, apart from contributions to the upkeep of the Fontainebleau establishment and the money required for their constant journeys to and from and all over France, there was a two-pronged squeeze on his resources—gambling and the financing of a de luxe shop which Jenny Dolly opened on the fashionable Champs-Elysées, in Paris.

I sometimes visited the shop, but I was not there on the opening day. Gloria, our famous Oxford Street model, described the scene to me. All fashionable France turned up for a reception that staggered even the wealthiest. The contents of the shop rivalled those of the Louvre. For Jenny had ransacked the world for the most expensive merchandise obtainable, from fabulous silks to the rarest ceramics. The *pièce de résistance* was a replica of her bedroom at Fontainebleau.

After the reception, Gloria went with Jenny to Fontainebleau and stayed the night there, occupying a bed in Jenny's room. She was awakened in the morning by Gordon Selfridge entering with a maid bringing in breakfast.

"I was rather embarrassed," Gloria told me. "You know what a stern man he is. Here he was quite different. He was in a dressing-gown and slippers, poured out the tea, buttered our toast, and sat on Jenny's bed, chatting about the shop."

When and under what circumstances the business was finally wound up, I do not know. I assume it died of anaemia, brought about by a stoppage of the Selfridge financial blood transfusions.

Nobody, so far as I know, lamented its passing, least of all Selfridge, who was by that time making a big effort to reduce his £180,000 debt to the company.

In the early 1930s I had an opportunity to distinguish between the sisters, for only Jenny was present. It was at one of Gordon Selfridge's famous general election parties at the store. Everybody in London who was anybody was there. I remember asking Winston Churchill whether he was comfortable on the floor and handing him a sandwich.

Then I noticed Selfridge, a splendid figure in tails and white tie, standing in a corner surveying his guests. Near him was Jenny Dolly.

In those days jewelled bracelets were much worn by women of fashion. Some of the ladies wore as many as five between wrist and elbow; but Jenny Dolly's collection was far richer than any other on show that night. She wore jewelled bracelets on both arms, and as she moved they flashed prismatic lights from emeralds, rubies and other stones.

From her shoulder hung a magnificent chinchilla cape, which must have cost between £3,000 and £4,000.

Some time ago I talked with a friend who knew both Selfridge and Jenny well.

"Selfridge got rid of £2 million in eight years," he said. "Everybody in France looked upon him as a multi-millionaire, and he spent like one. I can't hope to describe some of the parties; they were absolutely fantastic.

"But those £2 million were responsible for two lives. Jenny killed herself in Hollywood when she was at the end of her tether. And you know what happened to Selfridge."

But this was all much later. For most of the years during which I knew him at the store, Selfridge's swift business skill was unimpaired.

In 1921 the trade boom that followed the end of the first World War was coming to an end, though few people in the retail world seemed to know it.

But one morning Selfridge rang for me. His desk was covered with American newspapers. "Williams," he said, "we're nearing the end of the boom."

"What makes you think so, Mr. Selfridge?"

"These." He pointed to the open newspapers in front of him. "John Wanamaker sees it in America. It won't be long coming here. Look at these advertisements."

They were sensational. Wanamaker had taken full pages in the newspapers to announce that the prices of all goods in his store except proprietary brands would be reduced by twenty per cent.

"These advertisements tell me all I want to know about the immediate future. We must follow suit—and get in first."

"But twenty per cent, Mr. Selfridge!"

"We can't go as far as that. We'll make it ten per cent."

What would now be called a security blackout concealed our preparations. Whole-page advertisements for the newspapers were drawn up in secret and not released until the last moment; then they were suddenly crashed on the world over the weekend. We expected a big response but were not prepared for the almost panic-buying that our announcement produced.

On the Monday morning the store opened to admit crowds that had been lining up since midnight. Fantastic business was done. Hour after hour, day after day, the flow of shoppers swelled until at the end of the first week all trading records had been broken. I remember Selfridge saying: "It doesn't look like a slump, does it? But we shall see, Williams, we shall see."

The London retail trade was aghast. Our competitors again tried to explain matters to their own satisfaction.

"Selfridge has shot his bolt this time." Or "Selfridge is broke. He is trying to raise cash." Or "This is it. He is on the verge of bankruptcy."

Within a few months they knew better, for the slump soon followed, and they were forced to slash prices even more drastically, in an effort to attract shoppers who had already spent to the limit at Selfridge's. But we had made thousands of new customers and cleared out stock which was sticking

before the sale. Thus we were able to restock with the right goods at the right prices.

This was one of Selfridge's greatest trading triumphs during the years between the two wars—triumphs which resulted from "getting them in."

Aircraft always pulled in the crowds. Selfridge's first success was when he exhibited the plane in which Bleriot crossed the Channel. An attraction that ran it very close in bringing people into the store was the machine flown by Lord Clydesdale over the summit of Everest.

When the news reached London that Alan (later Sir Alan) Cobham intended to land his seaplane on the Thames opposite the Houses of Parliament after his flight to Australia and back, Selfridge told me to get the plane for the store. We paid £500 for the right to exhibit it on the roof, and business soared.

I was with Selfridge in his office one day when he suddenly asked: "Have you ever seen £1 million worth of diamonds, Williams, apart from the Crown jewels?"

"No, not that I'm aware of."

"I think many people would like to see £1 million worth of diamonds. We'll show them—here in this store. It ought to bring them in."

Arrangements were made with a diamond syndicate to lend us cut and uncut stones. A special showcase of unbreakable glass was made, the size of a small room, about twelve feet by eight. Insurances on the diamonds were taken out and security safeguards set up and tested. Apart from uniformed policemen on duty there were four plain-clothes men. A barrier, some yards from the showcase, kept visitors at a proper distance from the treasure. Every night the diamonds were removed to a safe deposit under guard.

The exhibition was an immense success. But while it lasted we were always on edge. Rumour reached us that a gang of jewel thieves was planning to raid the store. Guards were doubled around the showcase, and detectives kept watch on the store entrances for criminal characters. The days came and went without trouble.

Then suddenly there was panic. One feature of the security arrangements was an invisible ray which rang an alarm bell when anything crossed it. If the bell rang, it meant that somebody must have opened the showcase.

At three o'clock one afternoon the alarm went off, and all the security forces rushed into action. There stood the showcase unopened, with a large crowd of visitors pressed against the barrier. Then the alarm stopped as suddenly as it had started. We all breathed freely. In a few minutes the bell rang again. Somebody said: "There's a ghost inside the case."

Gordon Selfridge solved the mystery without moving from his desk. "Have you thought," he said, "that a fly might have got inside the case?

Whenever the fly crossed the invisible ray the bell rang.

Of course, the story reached the newspapers. I saw to that. But I often wondered if Selfridge had smuggled the fly into the case to ensure publicity.

HE was quick to appreciate the English respect for aristocracy, and was the first man of merchandise to use prominent society figures to attract people to the store.

He decided to invite beautiful débutantes of high social standing to act as mannequins at special parades in the store for two weeks at a salary of £20 a week. The response to invitations was enthusiastic and the parades were a tremendous business success. Relations and friends of the girls flocked to Oxford Street.

The ice rink also got them in. Ice-skating had been out of fashion for many years. It was suggested to us that we might open a rink on the roof. Selfridge approved, and we ran ice ballets in the open air. Thousands came to see the spectacles, and an evening club was soon formed by some wealthy devotees of ice-skating. From this grew rinks throughout the country. Once more, Selfridge had changed the habits of the people.

He missed nothing calculated to make a mark on the lives of people. His method was to tune in to the achievements of his time and capture, in displays at his own business, the public interest they awakened; thus he carried the life of his age into the store.

The morning came when he threw out an idea that was to lead to one of the most important social events of the period between the two world wars—the famous general election parties at the store.

"This coming general election, Williams," he said to me. "I am thinking of giving a party for a few friends. Something intimate. Let me have your ideas."

The idea of a small, intimate affair was soon cast aside, and I began to play with the notion of a great party to be held in the store, to which the most famous men and women in London should be invited.

He listened to me in silence, but I could feel that he not only approved of my plans but that his mind was racing ahead, driven by his natural instinct for showmanship. He set about planning the party on a lavish scale.

The top floor of the store was selected. Before the stage, from which the election results would be announced, was seating for an audience of several hundred people. To the rear of the seats was the dance-floor, which was laid on top of the carpet. To the right were dining-tables, with seating for a hundred or more of the guests, and on the left a long cold-buffet table and a gentlemen's lounge. Two well-known bands were engaged, and also famous entertainers.

In those days there were no microphones in general use, so announcements had to be made through megaphones. A toastmaster, in the scarlet uniform of his office, was to make the announcements.

A large scoreboard was erected to show at a glance the state of the poll. Selfridge's models, including the reigning queen, Gloria, were pressed into service to hand guests election books which set out the political state of each constituency before the poll, and when results came in page references were read out to the audience.

We worked like galley-slaves for a week on preparations for the party.

Three rehearsals were held, and Selfridge made a final inspection as soon as the store closed. The guests were due to arrive at nine. More than five hundred acceptances had been received.

The first man I singled out was the Lord Chief Justice, the first woman, Lady Lavery, the beautiful wife of the portrait painter, Sir John Lavery, R.A.; her face now decorates the banknotes of Eire.

Everybody who was anybody in London society seemed to be there—famous hostesses, bankers, scientists, commercial magnates, cabinet ministers, church dignitaries, heads of the professions from the Royal Navy to the Law, stage stars, explorers and sportsmen, and the most beautifully dressed women I had ever seen.

Below stairs were countless bottles of champagne. It flowed from nine o'clock to the small hours of the morning as freely as the Thames. Selfridge had issued instructions that it was to be served without stint, and the waiters obeyed him with enthusiasm. In addition to champagne there was every drink known to the wet parade on tap.

ABOUT midnight I noticed a perceptible increase in the number of guests. We had budgeted for five hundred—the number of acceptances. Every seat was occupied and there were groups of people all over the place. I suspected that we had gatecrashers and I was right.

Many young uninvited bloods of the town, with their girl friends, had succeeded in convincing the commissionaires that they had forgotten their invitation cards or belonged to parties already inside.

At three o'clock in the morning eggs and bacon and beer were served. When dawn broke the party seemed to have gained a new lease of life, but finally the guests began to depart, and when the last one had gone, scores of workers went into action to clear away the debris.

All the time the party had been going on, a crowd collected in Oxford Street outside the store, for arrangements had been made to flash the election results on a screen fixed on the opposite side of the street. It was the last time that happened. The crowd stopped the traffic, and the police informed us that such a gathering would never be allowed again.

There were five more general election parties, the last one in 1935, when there were 3,600 guests.

After one of the parties, Selfridge remarked to me casually, dismissing the previous night's affair as if it were in the nature of things: "I suppose, Williams, that most of our guests remember us in some way. Some of them—the best ones, I like to think—may be grateful. I can't think it will do us any harm. But blessed is he that expecteth nothing, for he shall not be disappointed. . . . Now there's this question of. . . ."

And the previous night's party was brushed aside, the lights and music, the wine and talk, the glittering parade of famous men and beautiful women were consigned to limbo until the next time. And the day's work began.

NEXT WEEK: Gordon Selfridge tries to raise more money

"No Name on the Door," by A. H. Williams, is published by W. H. Allen & Co. at 18s.

OPEN TO VIEW

by JAMES LEES-MILNE

Drawn by ROWLAND HILDER

Lord Dysart proposed to a young lady one hour after meeting her—and was accepted

IN 1688 William of Orange landed in England. Before his father-in-law, James II, fled the country, William wrote him a letter in which he recommended him for his own safety to retire to Ham House, where he would be courteously treated. But the King rejected the proposal out of hand.

"Ham is a very ill winter house," he retorted, "and now unfurnished." Instead he took a boat to France.

At this time Ham still belonged to Elizabeth, Countess of Dysart and widowed Duchess of Lauderdale, who had inherited the house from her father, William Murray.

He had been whipping-boy to Charles I—bearing the young prince's punishments for him—and in later life was rewarded for these disagreeable services with the earldom of Dysart and the gift of Ham.

Elizabeth was first married in 1647 to Sir Lionel Tollemache, and their descendant, a later Sir Lionel Tollemache, gave Ham to the National Trust three hundred years later. But the man she loved and eventually married as her second husband was the Duke of Lauderdale. He had been captured by the Parliamentarians after the Battle of Worcester, and Elizabeth boasted that owing to her seduction of Oliver Cromwell her lover was not sent to the block.

Lauderdale and his Duchess spent a fortune on redecorating and furnishing Ham, which since their day has scarcely been altered. Its original Stuart portraits, tapestries, furniture and silver grates, fire tongs and bellows make it one of the least spoilt of the great seventeenth-century houses.

On the Duchess's death the son of her first marriage succeeded to her title and property. Lord Dysart was so stingy that rather than invite a caller to a meal he would hide in the garden when the hour of eating approached.

The fifth Earl proposed to the favourite niece of Horace Walpole within an hour of meeting her. The lady was twenty-two but already considered herself on the shelf, and so accepted him without hesitation. To her uncle she wrote in explanation: "Some people say I am handsome, some say I am not. I believe the truth is that I am likely to be large and to go off soon."

How to get there: Ham House is close to Richmond, Surrey. *Open:* April to October: weekdays, 10 till 6; Sundays, 2.30 till 6. November to March: weekdays, 10 till 4; Sundays, 2.30 till 4.

WIN £1,500 CASH
and £10 SUPER HAMPER

WHO wants a thrilling telegram on Christmas Eve—with news of winning a big First Prize cheque plus £10 giant hamper? YOU do, of course! So enjoy half an hour making *Bullets* for your coupon below—and post it by Monday, December 17. It can win you a Merry Christmas and a £1,500 start in 1957.

★ ★ ★

Most meritorious of the "£300 plus—" First Prize "Bullets" in Contests 2,067 to 2,072 wins £1,500 cash—the First Prize cheque with Tournament award added.

THAT winning smile belongs to Mrs. G. M. Truscott ("Homeleigh," Darite, Liskeard, Cornwall)—one of the nine woman competitors to score a First in *Bullets* this year!

50 NEW YEAR CHEQUES

£300, £25, £10—each plus £10 SUPER HAMPER

£9, £8, £7, £6, 3 of £5, 10 of £3, 50s., 49s., 48s., 47s., 46s., 45s., 44s., 43s., 42s., 41s., 40s., 39s., 38s., 37s., 36s., 35s., 34s., 33s., 32s., 31s., 30s., 29s., 28s., 27s., 26s., 5 of 25s.

1,500 "GOOD SHOT" PRIZES

and £2 "Bullets" SEASONS

—see details on coupon

THIS WAY TO £1,500

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

In The 1957 Match	A Slacker
The Railwaymen	Deplorable
Man With A Scythe	No Life
The Poles	The Blundering Amateur
Twelve Months	Lost Everything
The Old School	Wedded Bliss
She Said "Yes," So	Winter In Sleepytown
Genie Automation	When Dad Wheels The Pram
Made The Angels Weep	Made Tongues Wag
In The German Factory	If The Channel Dried Up

Incomplete "Examples"—see instructions

Law Of The.....	When The.....Caught Fire
Getting Away With.....	.....Ahead
.....Of The Air	The.....Users' Association

EXAMPLE ..... 6d.

BULLET .....

EX. ..... 6d.

B. .....

EX. ..... 6d.

B. .....

EX. ..... 6d.

B. .....

EX. ..... 6d.

B. .....

£2 "BULLETS" SEASONS — A £2 *Bullets* Season Ticket accompanies each of the 50 chief prizes won with *Bullet* which was one of five or more on single coupon or plain-paper entry sheet.

2,069

Closing Postmark MONDAY, DEC. 17

I agree to Rules and enclose P.O.

Value.....

No.....

Signed.....

Address.....

.....

NEW SURPRISES in this "BULLETIN"

Stick 2½d. stamp on this coupon (which you can enclose with your entry) for the new 4-in-1 "*Bullets*" *Bulletin*, containing next three big Prize Offers.

NAME .....

ADDRESS.....

.....843

STICK **2½d.** STAMP here for "*Bulletin*"

NEXT WEEK 366 PRIZES for ONE "BULLET"!

Chief Winners No. 2,064

FIRST PRIZE, £300 (or £1,500 if Tournament winner) plus Turkey: H. Edwards, 6 Hibbert Road, Mansfield, Notts:

Started Something "Blazing" Inside *Me*—Budapest.

£25: J. B. Taylor, "Highgate," New Road, Armitage, Rugeley, Staffs: EMIGRANT'S FAVOURITE—DREAM—FISH, CHIPS—*Pea-souper*! £10: Miss M. Bailey, 30 Birch Terrace, Higher Baxenden, Accrington: THE PRIZE IS WATCHING—MY YOUNGSTER LOSE *Cheerfully*.

OTHER AWARDS: £9: J. E. Hurley, "Pyrcot," North Street, Williton, Taunton: IN THE SUEZ CAULDRON — SICKENING PLOP — SOVIET TEAR-DROP! £8: W. E. Hawes, Alma House, Wells, Norfolk: FROM THE WELL OF TRUTH—AND *Wash-tub*, GRANNY'S PHILOSOPHY. £7: Mrs. M. Marson, 8 Wheeldon Avenue, Derby: BREATHING DEFIANCE—IN HUNGARY, *Smokeless* CHIMNEYS. £6: F. Knighton, 33 Wellfield Road, Preston, Lancs: HOLDING TORCH UP—*Steadily*, OUR JITTERBUGGING YOUTH! £5: Mrs. E. Bullamore, 32 Drummond Gardens, Epsom: FORTUNE'S FAVOURITE—"CARRYING" *Sixteen* STONE—BOOKIE! £5: A. E. Compton, 33 Montague Road, London, N.15: GRANNY'S FAVOURITE—EAST LYNNE—GRANDPA'S, *Vera*! £5: W. H. Richards, 72 Heol Llan, North Cornelly, Pyle, Glamorgan: THAT CHAP, JONES—WE UNDERESTIMATED—WE'RE *Under*!

(Each winner from £25 to £5 receives also a Christmas Turkey.)

Winners of £3 plus Turkey and £2 plus Fowl have been notified. 1,500 "Good Shots" have also been posted.

(Tournament winner will be announced in earliest possible issue.)

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent adjudicators.

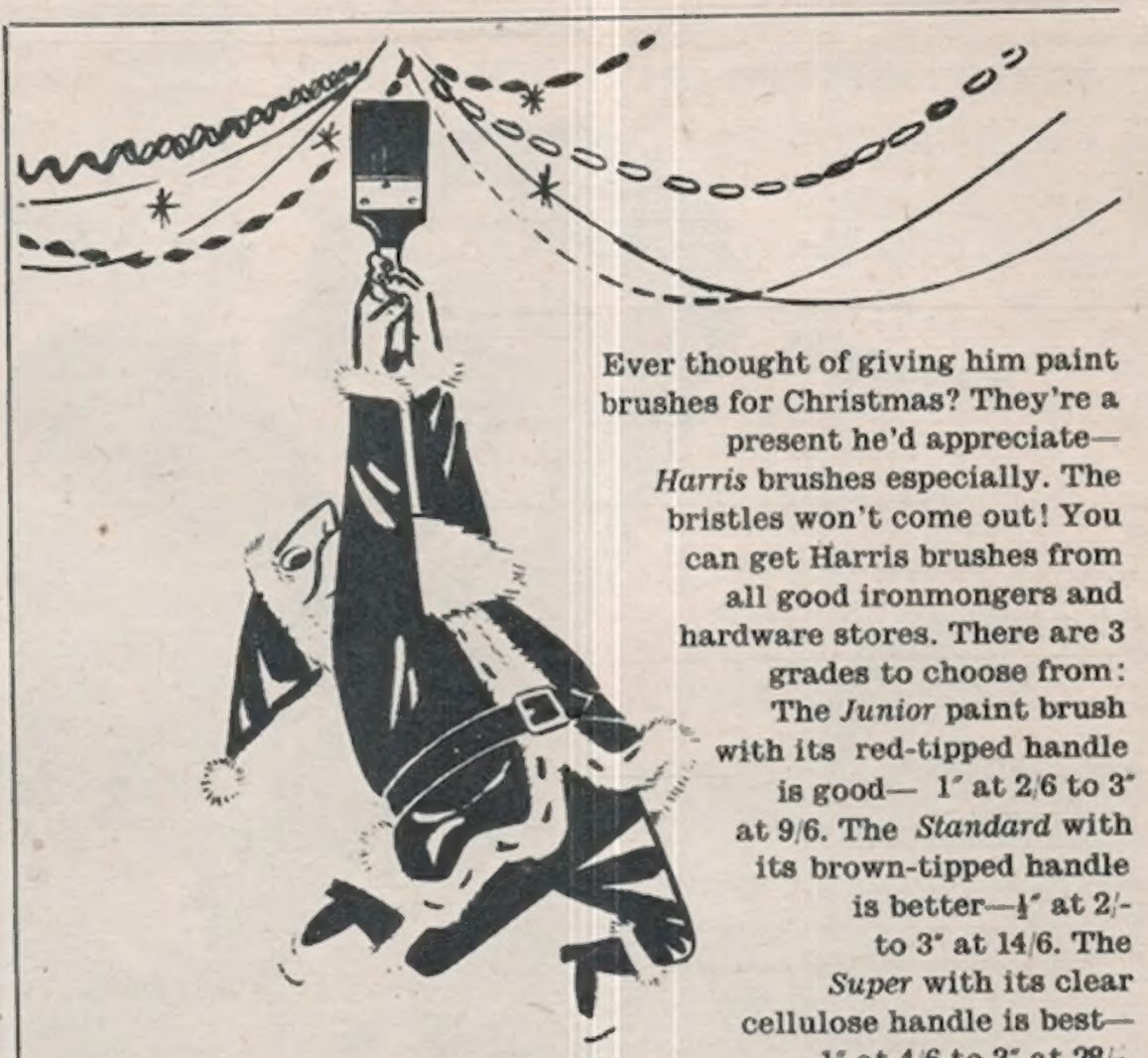
3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. Make P.O. payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in JOHN BULL dated January 19), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, December 29, for early news of No. 2,069 result.)

POST ENTRY

"Bullets" 2,069, "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.99



Ever thought of giving him paint brushes for Christmas? They're a present he'd appreciate—*Harris* brushes especially. The bristles won't come out! You can get Harris brushes from all good ironmongers and hardware stores. There are 3 grades to choose from: The *Junior* paint brush with its red-tipped handle is good— 1" at 2/6 to 3" at 9/6. The *Standard* with its brown-tipped handle is better—½" at 2/- to 3" at 14/6. The *Super* with its clear cellulose handle is best—1" at 4/6 to 3" at 28/-.

Harris

the Christmas present with a name to its handle

L. G. HARRIS & CO. LTD., STOKE PRIOR, WORCS.

CBC 32

Full of fish—full of meat
The food that all cats love to eat.
Oh, isn't it a pity that
All kittens don't get Kit-E-Kat!

Every cat needs Kit-E-Kat every day, because it's a complete food . . . fresh white fish *and* herring plus *meat*, as well as extra vitamins and minerals! Kit-E-Kat is so easy and clean to serve, and there are several meals in every 9d tin.

All cats love

KIT-E-KAT

FRESH FISH AND MEAT—COOKED AND READY TO EAT

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Roberts

Sausages are a good meal . . .

WALL'S sausages are a FEAST!

A FEAST FOR THE EYES!

Plump with pork — tasty and tender — Wall's sausages are a feast from the first. It makes your mouth water just to *look* at them. So keep an eye on that 'help-yourself' husband of yours!

TEMPTATION'S IN THE AIR!

When Wall's sausages sizzle in the pan to an inviting golden brown, there's temptation in the air. The irresistible smell lures the family into the kitchen one after the other — makes hungry folk even hungrier!

A FEAST FOR YOUR FAMILY!

No need for any "come and get it!" Just watch your family wade in — to make a feast of an everyday meal. It's pork at its best they're enjoying — pork in its tenderest, tastiest form. More than just sausages — *Wall's* sausages.

Wall's

BY APPOINTMENT SUPPLIERS OF PORK SAUSAGES & MEAT PIES TO THE LATE QUEEN MARY T. WALL & SONS LTD.

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